

THOUGHTS & IMAGES

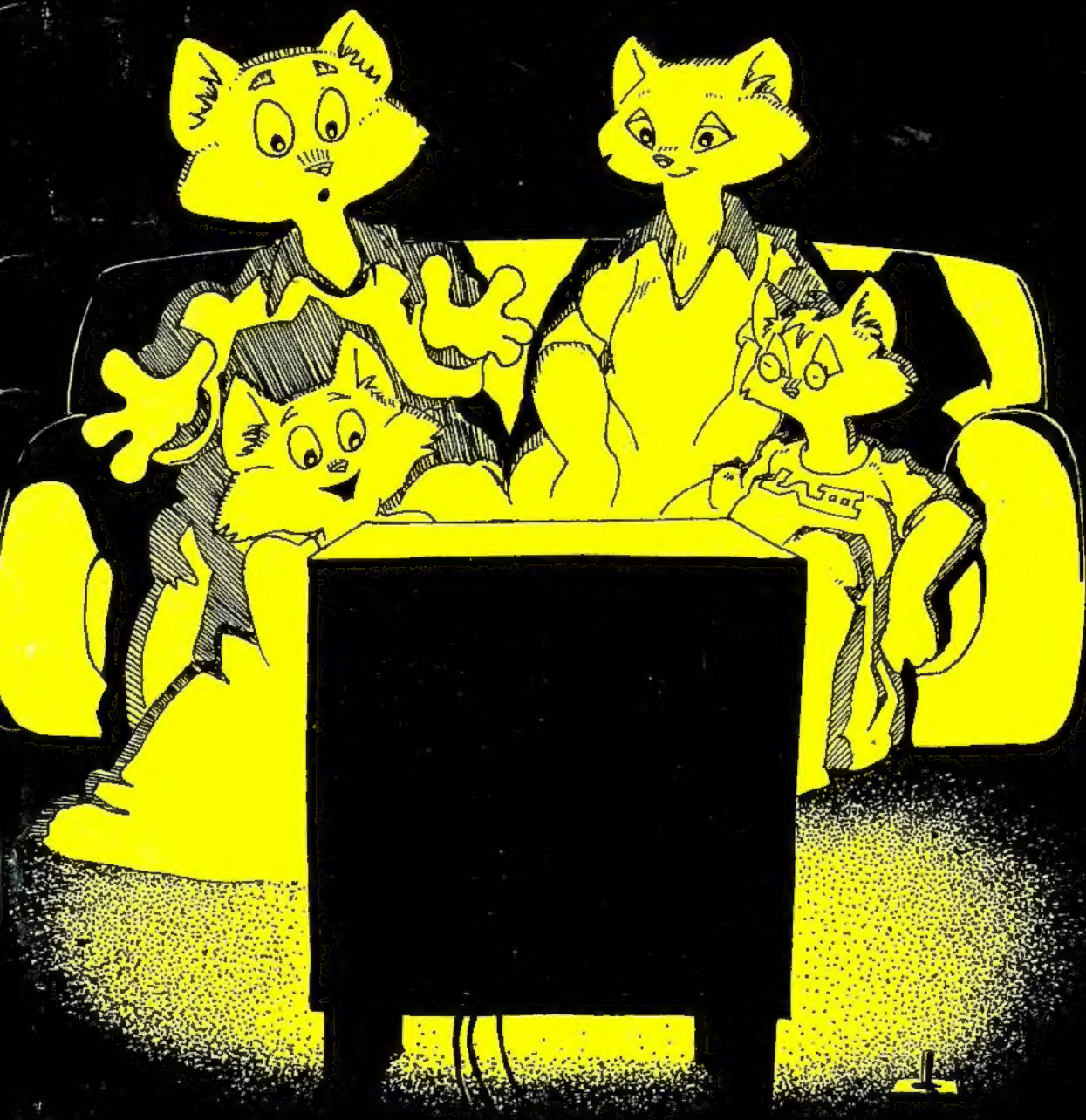
ALBEDO

NR. 6

\$2.00

ANTHROPOMORPHICS

CAN. \$2.50



People ask me "why funny animals?" when all I seem to be running is straight and, by some assessments, uninspired "sci-fi" and silly samurai sagas. On the other hand, I've printed the occasional fun bit, but, by and large, most has been material that some have argued would have worked as well, if not better, with more or less realistic human characters.

Well, for myself, I started out enjoying funny-animal art and animation early on. Fleischer's HOPPITY COMES TO TOWN and Tezuka's ALAKAZAM THE GREAT, along with the many Disney features, were early favorites. Vaughan Bode's JUNKWAFFLE material appealed to my technophilic tendencies, and I spent too much time working up intensely detailed backgrounds and infrastructures. Unlike Bode, I put in much more serious engineering and started working out social and political scenarios that drew on my being in the thick of international fun and games. (I was in the U.S.A.F., stationed in Germany, from '77 to '80 and was uncomfortably close to terrorism and protest, from Baader-Meinhof to neutron bombs to the Tehran hostage crisis.) So, I tended away from the fun and fantastic and towards the kind of serious science fiction that has also been a favorite of mine.

Notice, I didn't mention comic books. I've been reading Marvel and DC since the mid-60s, and in all that time, I've never considered myself much of a fan. Nor did I ever really try to emulate conventional comic-book art or writing. The stories, though fun, were, and still are, so flimsy and so demanding in their suspension of disbelief, that they cannot be, by and large, taken seriously at any level. The art aspect is a bit different. I'm simply trained in a different direction. I'm a fair illustrator and can, with sufficient motivation, do a reasonable oil or watercolor, but unless I'm inking someone else's pencils, I'm at best a pretty mediocre conventional cartoonist. Which, in all honesty, is half of why I ended up doing Erma and friends as funny animal. I simply couldn't do them in a timely fashion as humans in what most would consider a marketable style.

The other half of the reason goes back to backgrounds. I'd spent six years developing the whys and wherefores of the whole thing with a specific history in mind. Erma and her environment are as they are due to all that has happened before, just as we are the products of, and carry around in our behavior and society, the benefits and burdens of over 3000 years of our own history. True, I haven't done much yet to illustrate the differences, but trust me, it just wouldn't work with a species quick-change. Anyway, I'm still learning and hope to provide even more entertaining stories as time goes on, okay?

WRONGO! MARC'S COVER WAS LOST IN THE MAIL, AND I HAD TO DO A LAST-MINUTE REPLACEMENT

Hi guys! Now about this issue. The cover has been done by Marc Schirmeister, the Pasadena area cartoonist who did, uncredited, FLINCH GIDEON for ALBEDO nr. 1. Marc's also the editor of ROWRBRAZZLE, a funny animal cartoon fanzine, and all-around nice guy. HIGH ORBIT, by Deal Whitley, is a bit complicated. The major characters are descendents of, or made their first appearance in OPPORKNOCKITY TOONS, a fannish strip by Deal, which first appeared in ROWRBRAZZLE. The overall scenario of HIGH ORBIT is of a funny-animal Earth, just after the turn of the next century, and life in Clarke orbit. The title came from Matt Howarth's WRAB, pirate television (highly recommended), and was the inspiration for this "television special" issue. Matt also has the first of a several-part Konny and Czu adventure, HARVEST, in the issue. These two have previously appeared in Matt's THE HOBBY YAPS ARTIFACT (also highly recommended), and quite probably in several of his multitudinous mini-comics.

As you may have noticed, this issue is technically a month late. Lots of reasons for this, some of which are actually legitimate. Everyone else was late, Deal, especially, due to medical complications atop medical complications. Then there was the spectre of holiday postal chaos. So, it seemed that by letting things slide a little, I could avoid the rush, give everyone a chance to get their stuff in, and do at least a slightly better job at assembling the issue. No more "Pud Plant" and similar embarrassments. Well, sort of. With an eye towards this, I've taken up with this really neat red-head, who happens to be an editor and technical writer. Name's Bev Clark, and she edited the fanzine SKYWALKER for several years. Hopefully, I'll be able to cajole her into helping with the proofing and such. Another important detail, regarding her, is that by the time you all read this, I'll have moved out of my old home address and phone number. My post office box is still my permanent mailing address, so I can still be reached there. On to the future! The next issue is tentatively scheduled to have a Ken Macklin full-color cover. Gosh, wow! And Deal and Matt will continue their stories. As you might have noticed, Stan Sakai wasn't in this issue (it was his unsigned NIL-SON GROUNDTHUMPER in the last issue). Nor is he in the next. Between various commercial jobs, lettering Sergio Aragones' GROO, the Wanderer, and the occasional USAGI YOJIMBO story for the new Fantagraphics title, CRITTERS, he'll appear in ALBEDO only as the opportunity allows. Hopefully, Fantagraphics, myself, or someone else will snag him to do a collected USAGI YOJIMBO book.

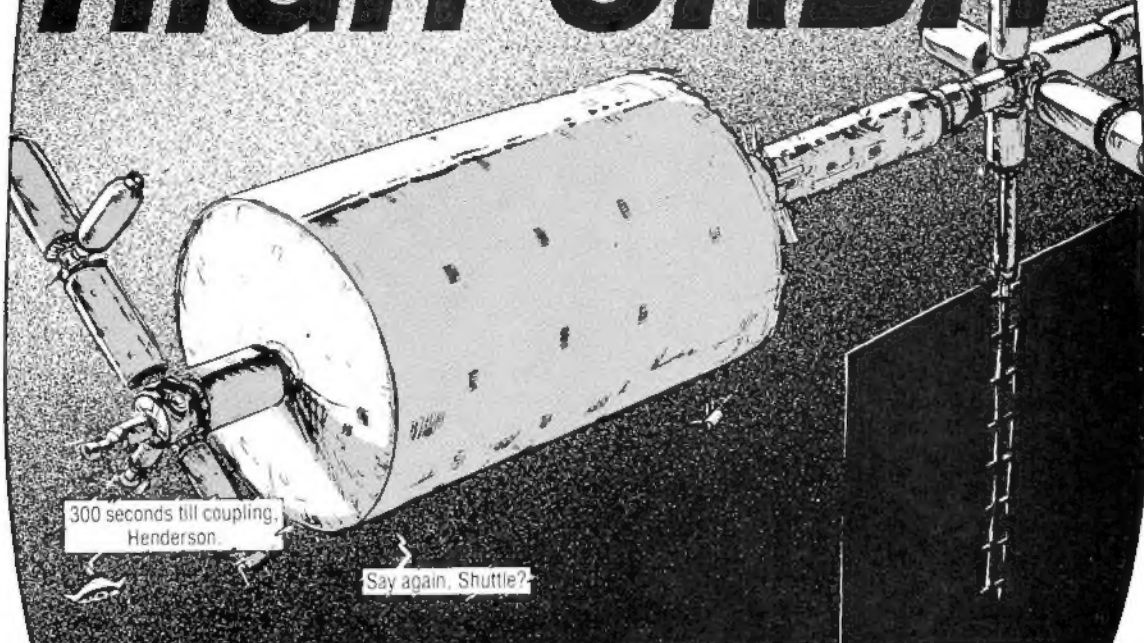
Thinking of reprints and things. ALBEDO nr. 1 and 2 are definitely not going to be reprinted. However, the two episodes of ERMA FELNA, EDF, will be published in a single volume, entitled COMMAND REVIEW. It will be the same size and price as a regular issue of ALBEDO. The first episode will be revised (typos and art cleaned up and reshot) and some additional background history will be added. I don't know whether or not this will be a regular product. A lot depends on the demand, as it takes nearly 5000 copies printed and sold just to break even. So, if the orders shape up, it could be out by April. Also in April, if not sooner, there's my ever-ongoing ZELL, SWORDDANCER (yep, that'll be the title, after all). Steve Adams and I couldn't be talked out of it, and again, dependent on massive wholesaler orders, we'll have another exciting new title on the racks.

WELL, ALMOST ALL THE BUGS —
ALBEDO NR 6 © 1986 STEVEN A. GALLAGHER P.O. Box 13419
INDIVIDUAL STORIES © 1986 By the RESPECTIVE ARTISTS SEATTLE, WA.
98109
PRINTED BY VALCO GRAPHICS, SEATTLE JAN. '86.
TYPESETTING By RocketType, SEATTLE (EXCEPT FOR THE PARTS I DIDN'T GET TO
THEM IN TIME.)

WRAB

PRESENTS

HIGH ORBIT



300 seconds till coupling,
Henderson.

Say again, Shuttle?



With Tetra Matthews



and Daniel S. DiGlamourmoor.



featuring
Arcadia, Zoe, and Zabriskie,
"Pockets," and Franny.



with Special Guest
Dr. Sabina Kitteridge-
DiGlamourmoor, Ph.D.



We will couple
in 253 seconds.

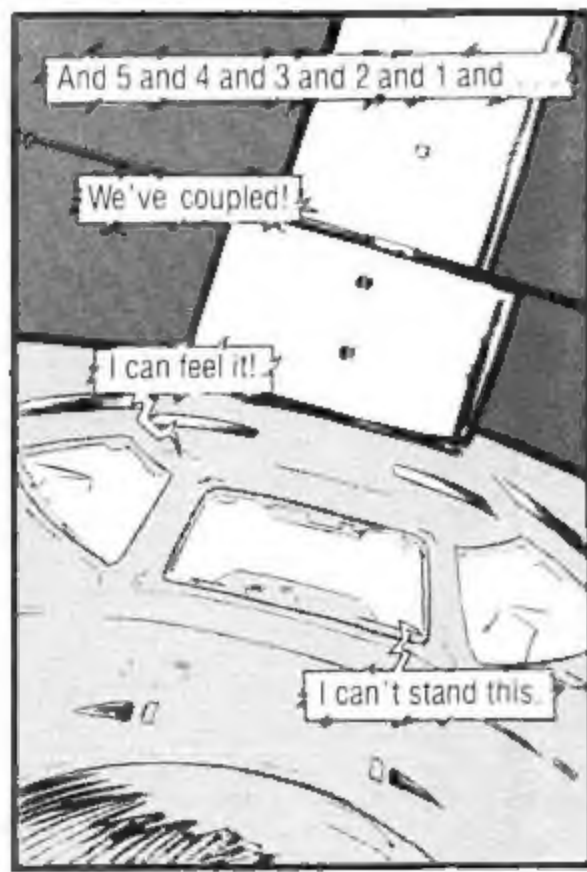
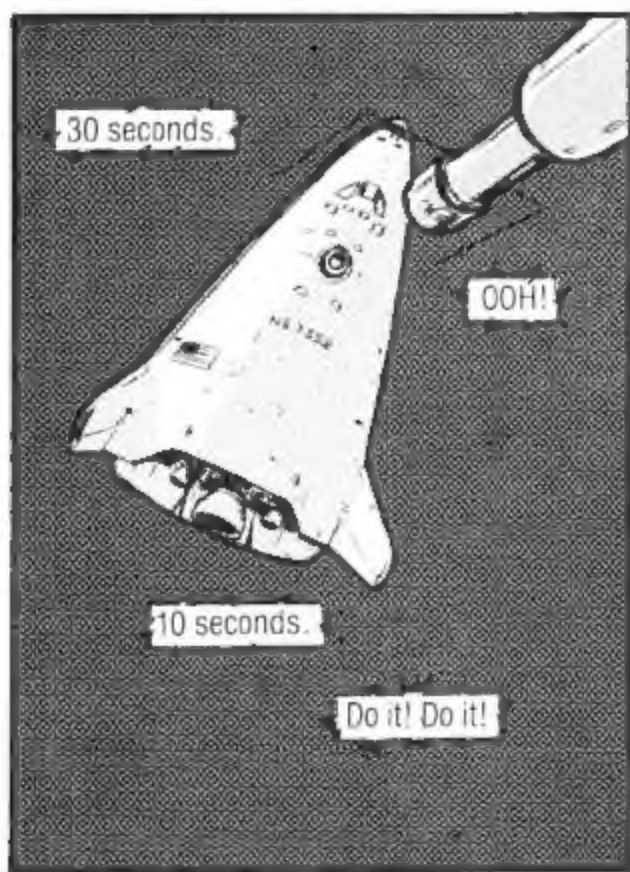
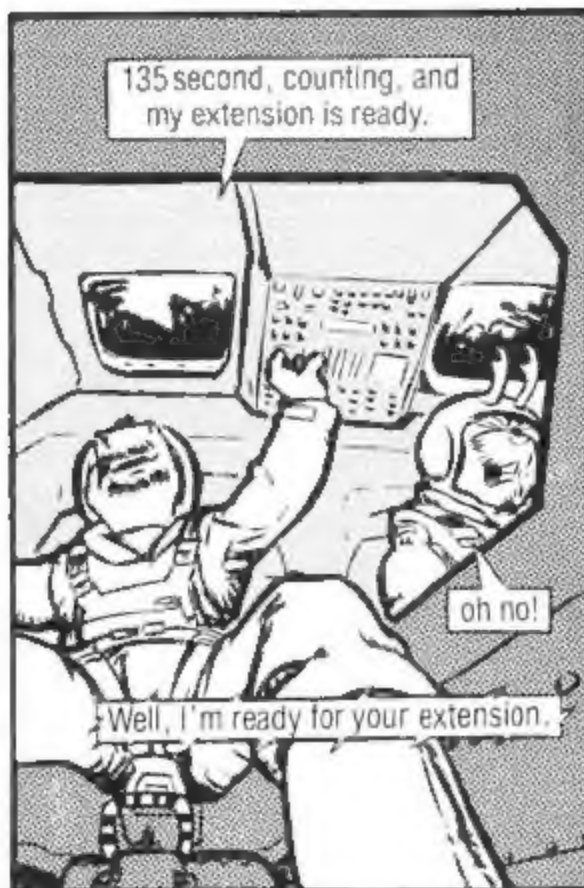
That's affirmative, Shuttle,
we'll be coupling soon.

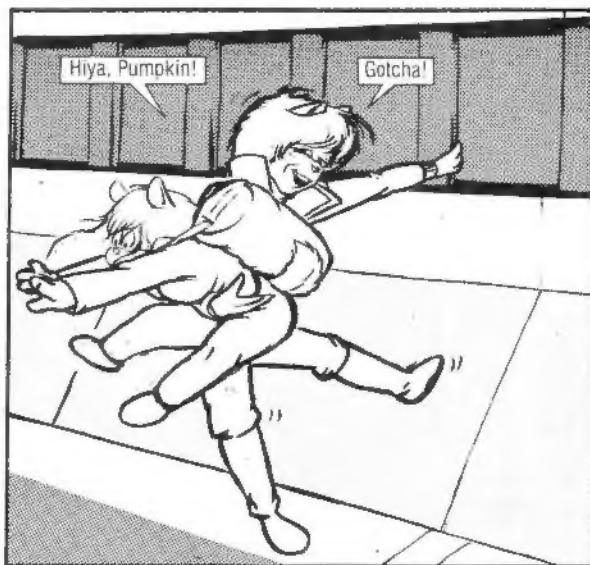
Oh Christ, not again.

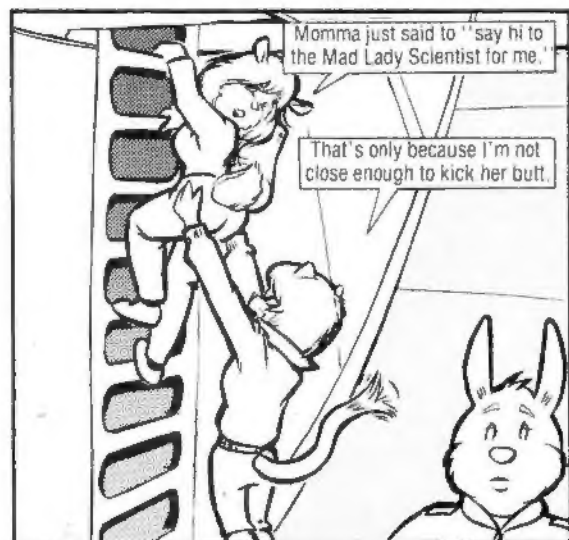
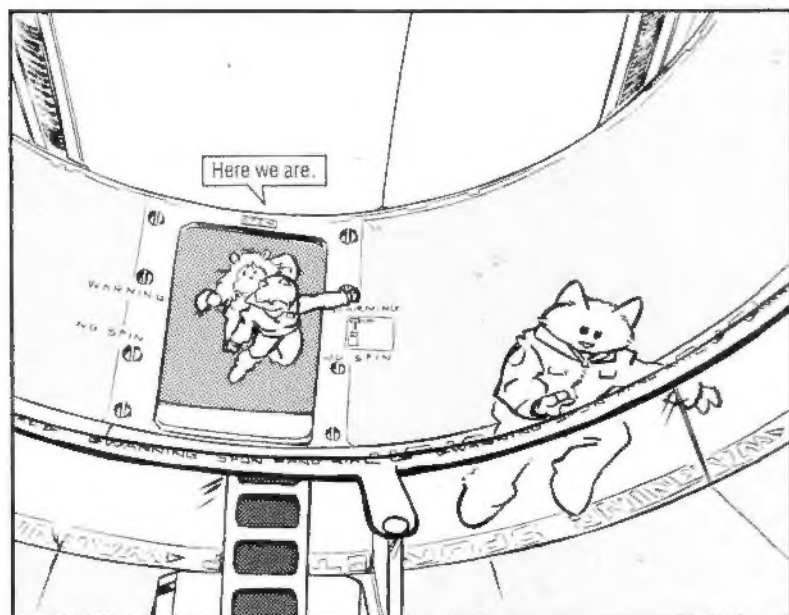


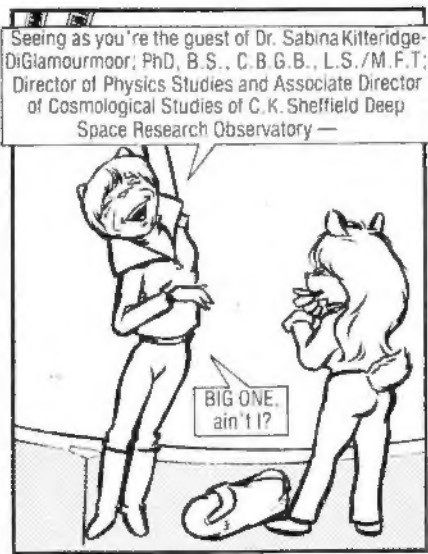
The lock is nice and warm.

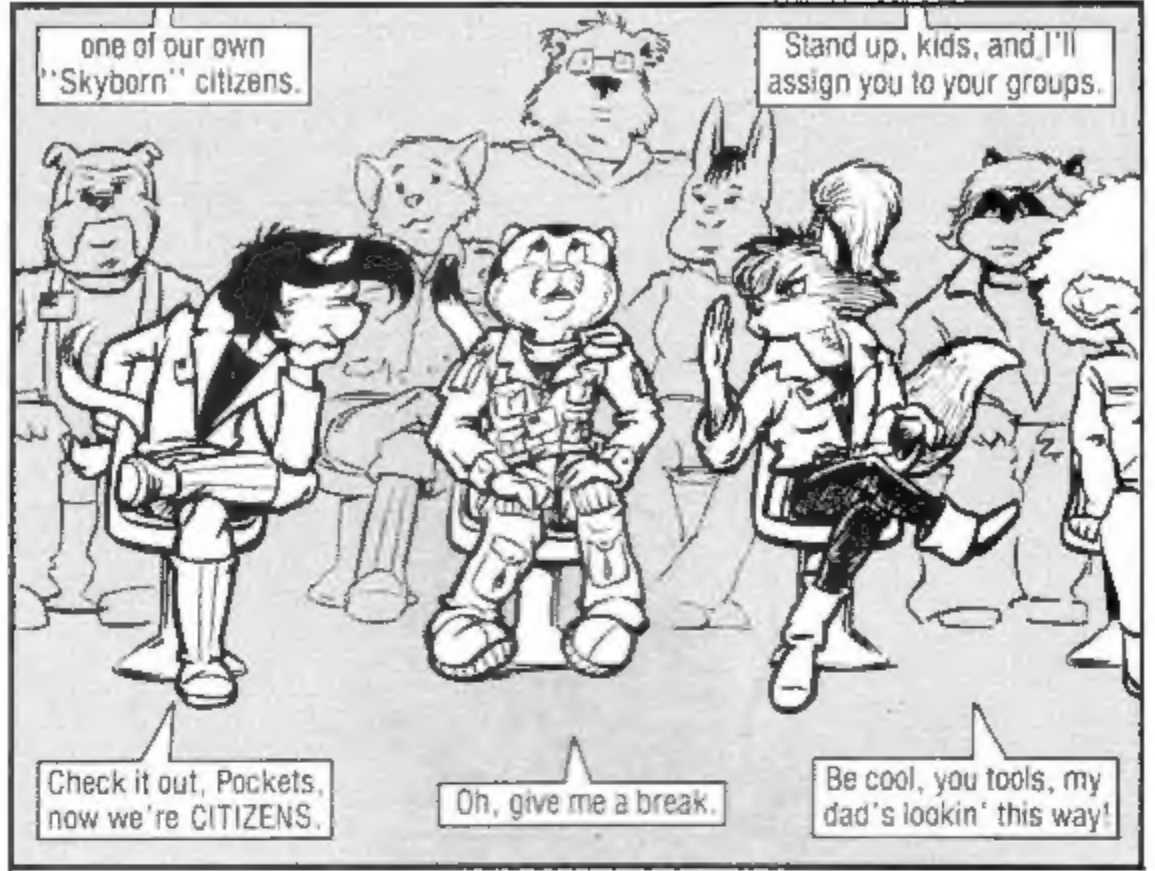
Say again, Comm-one?

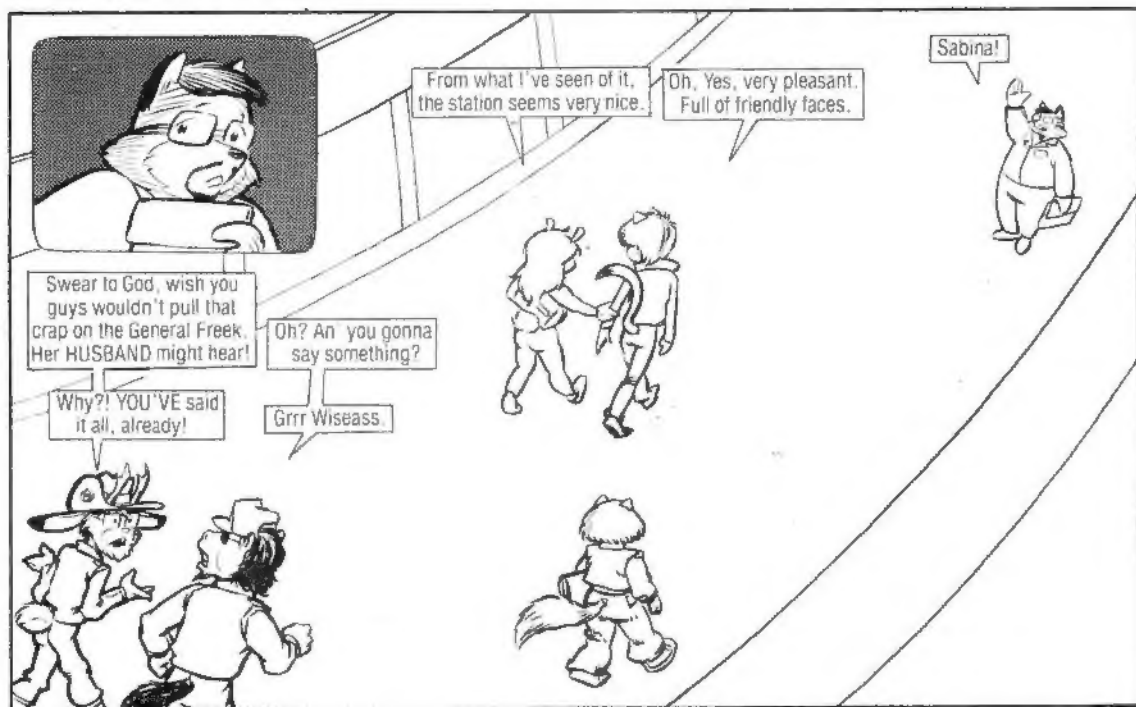


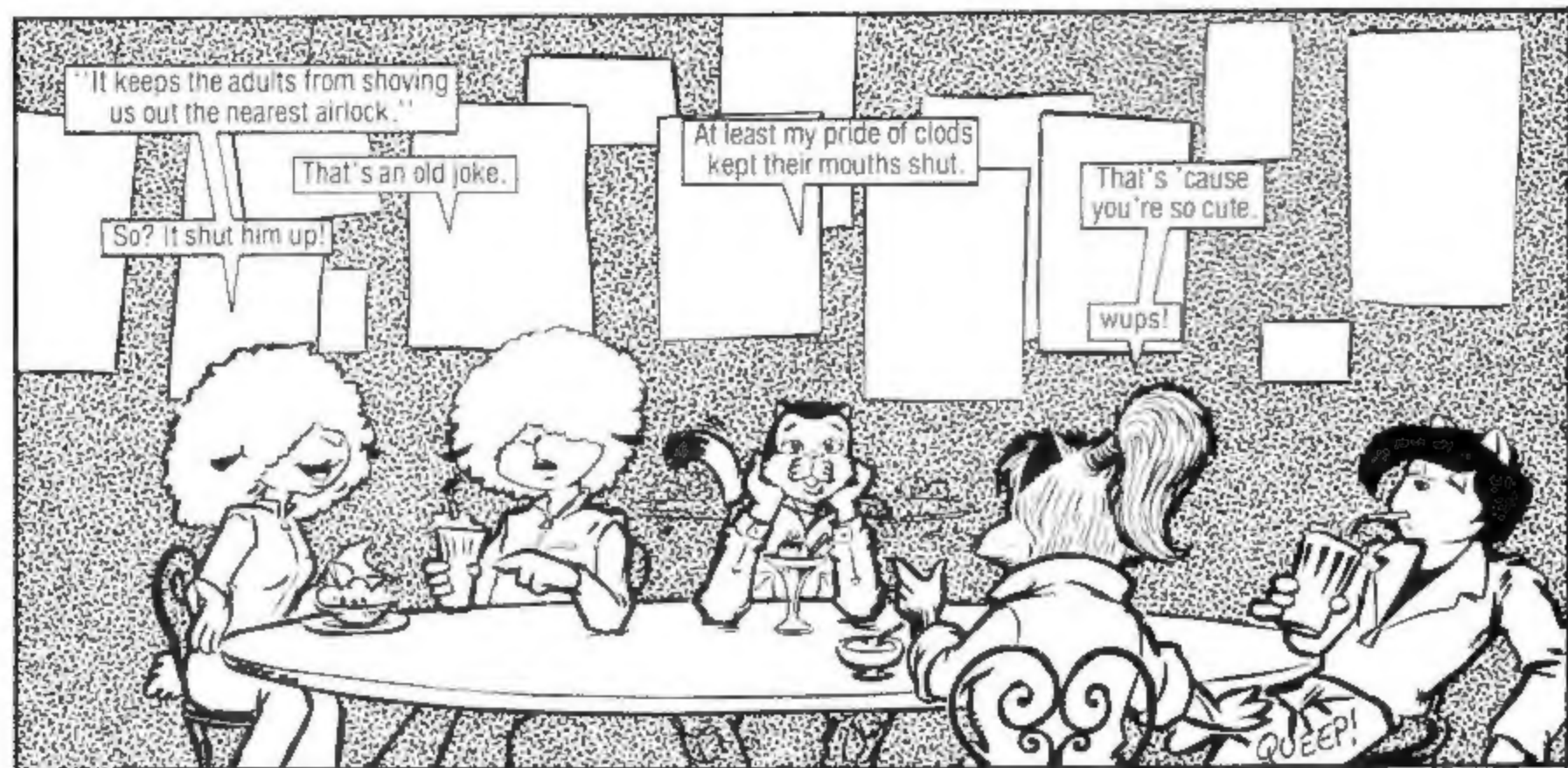


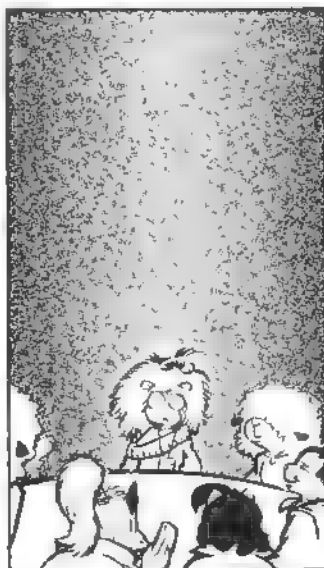


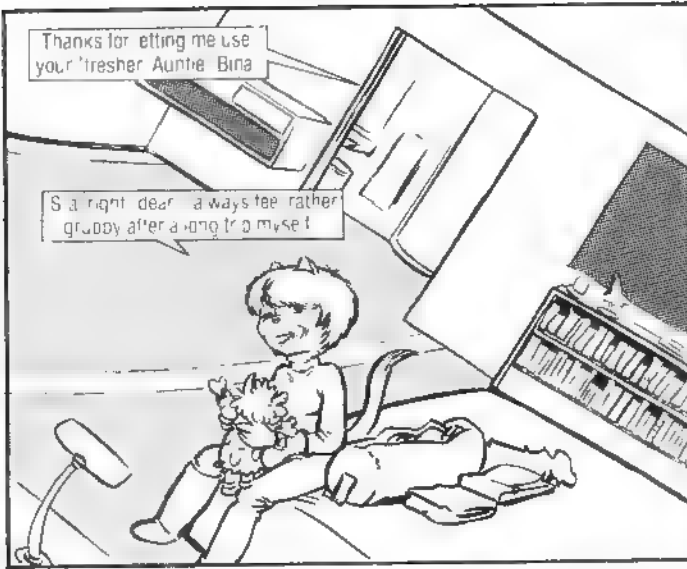


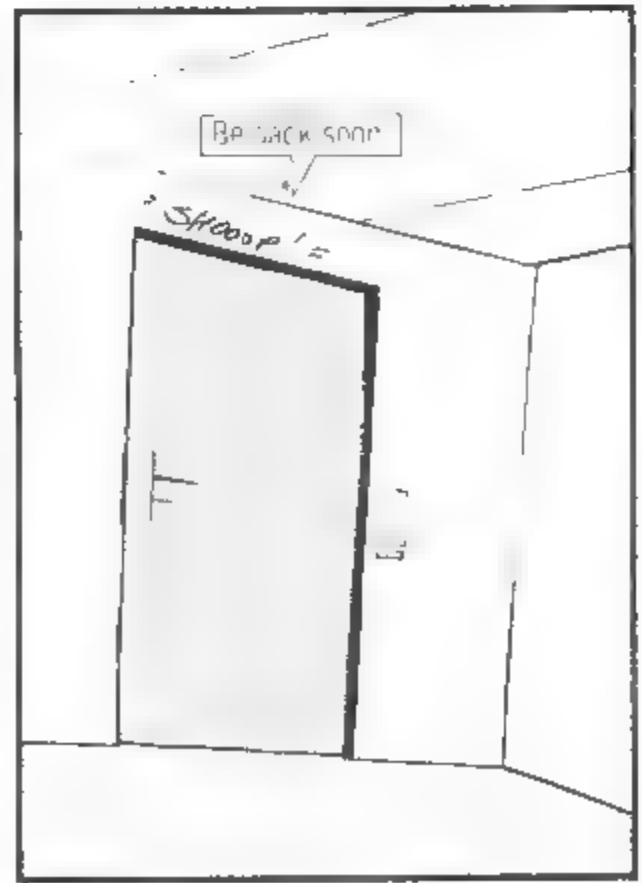
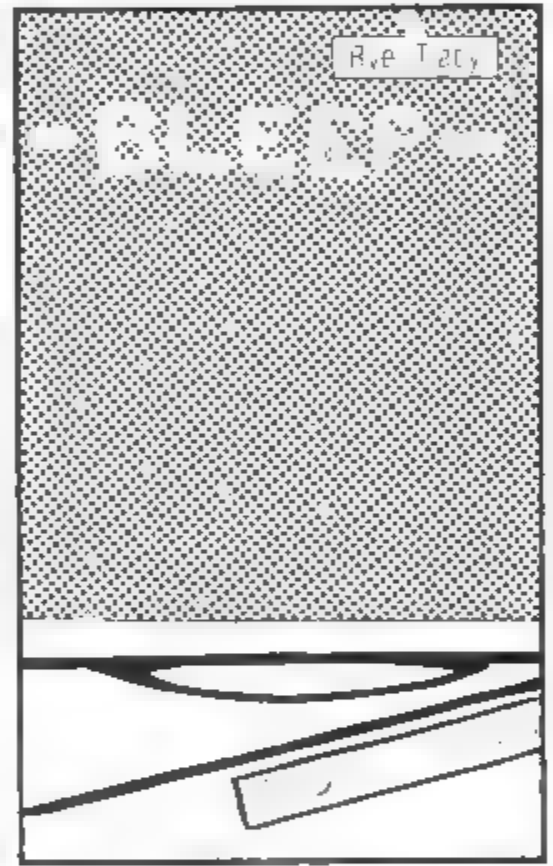
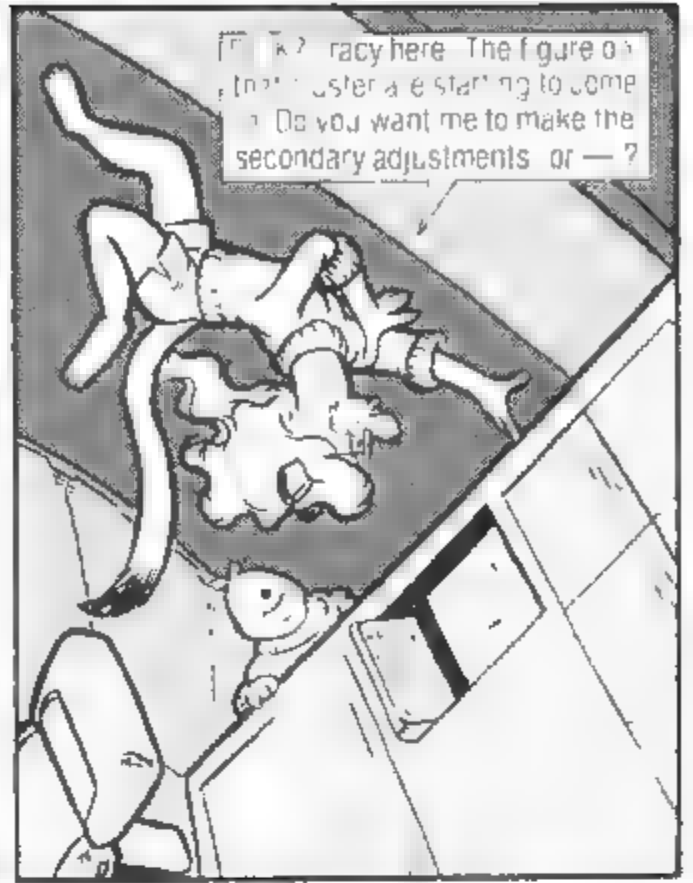


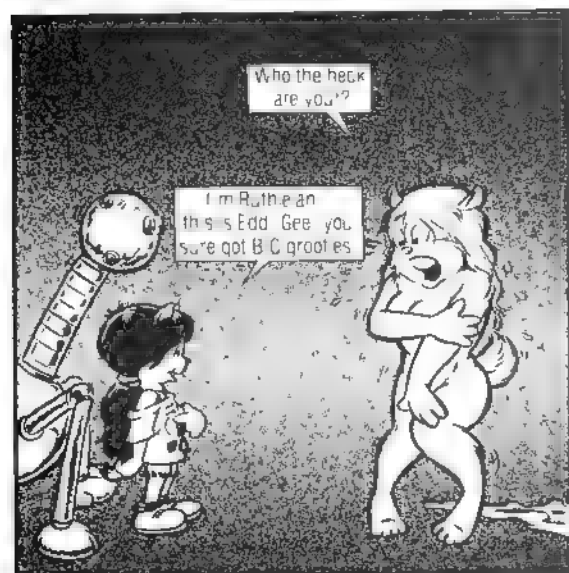
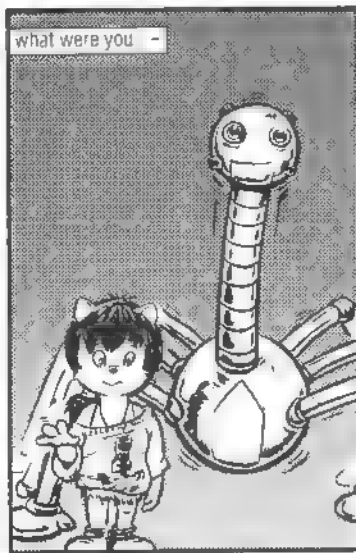
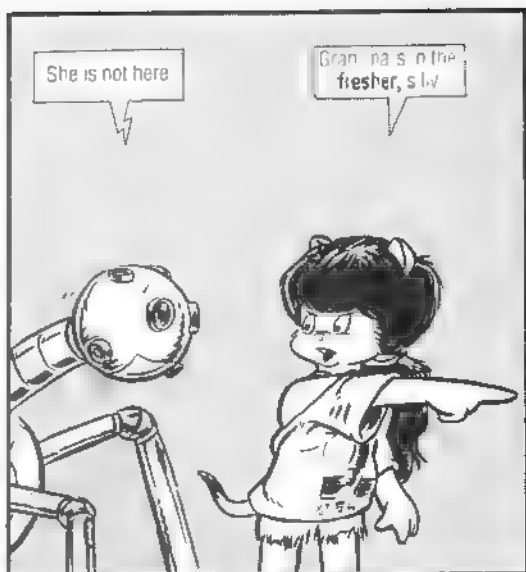












we'll return to High Orbit in just a moment

A LAST MINUTE POSTSCRIPT —
DEAL PENCILED "HIGH ORBIT" WHILE IN THE MIDDLE OF A SERIOUS MEDICAL CRISIS. THEN I STRUGGLED TO INK HIS UNFAMILIAR STYLE IN THE MIDDLE OF A MOVIE AND TWO EPISODES OF "CRITTERS". ANYWAY, WE'LL BE GETTING IT ALL TOGETHER A BIT BETTER NEXT TIME, PROMISE

ALSO, LOU SCARBOROUGH, ANOTHER DANGEROUSLY TALENTED CARTOONIST, GETS CO-OWNERSHIP FOR "SABINA" (HE AND DEAL ARE OLD RUNNING BUDDIES)

FINALLY, WHILE IN THE LAST OF THE INKING, I HEARD OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SHUTTLE CHALLENGER. THE THOUGHT OF A CATASTROPHIC FAILURE WAS NOT NEW TO ME, HAVING EDITED ONE OF THE FIRST PUBLIC ARTICLES ON THE SUBJECT YEARS AGO, BUT THERE'S A TERRIBLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INTELLECT AND EMOTION — AND TO SEE IT GO LIKE THAT — PAYMENT IN BLOOD CAN NEVER BE TOO HIGH A PRICE FOR THE STARS. HIGH ORBIT, AND BEYOND, IS A GOAL WORTHY THE SACRIFICE —

SA GALLACCI



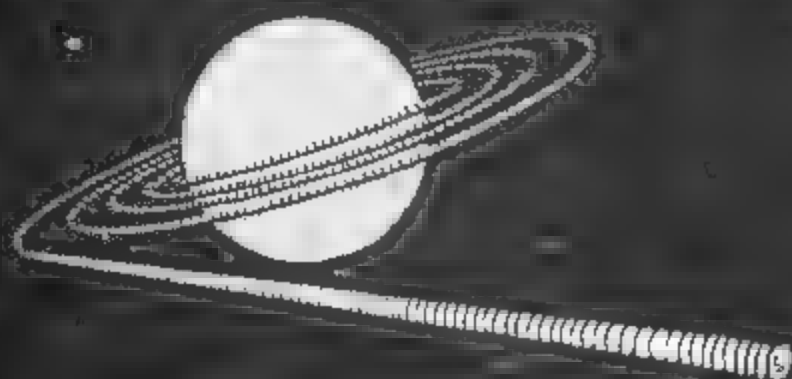
konny and ezu



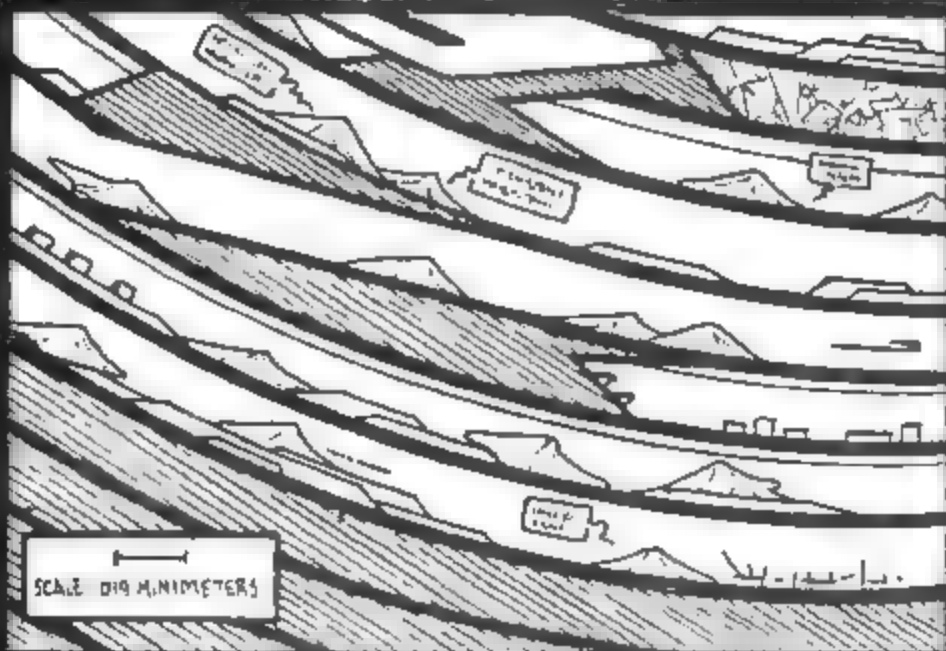
HANZZ

QUICK

OUT ON THE FRONTIER GALACTIC RIM, A NEUTRON STAR



...ESCAPE VELOCITY...

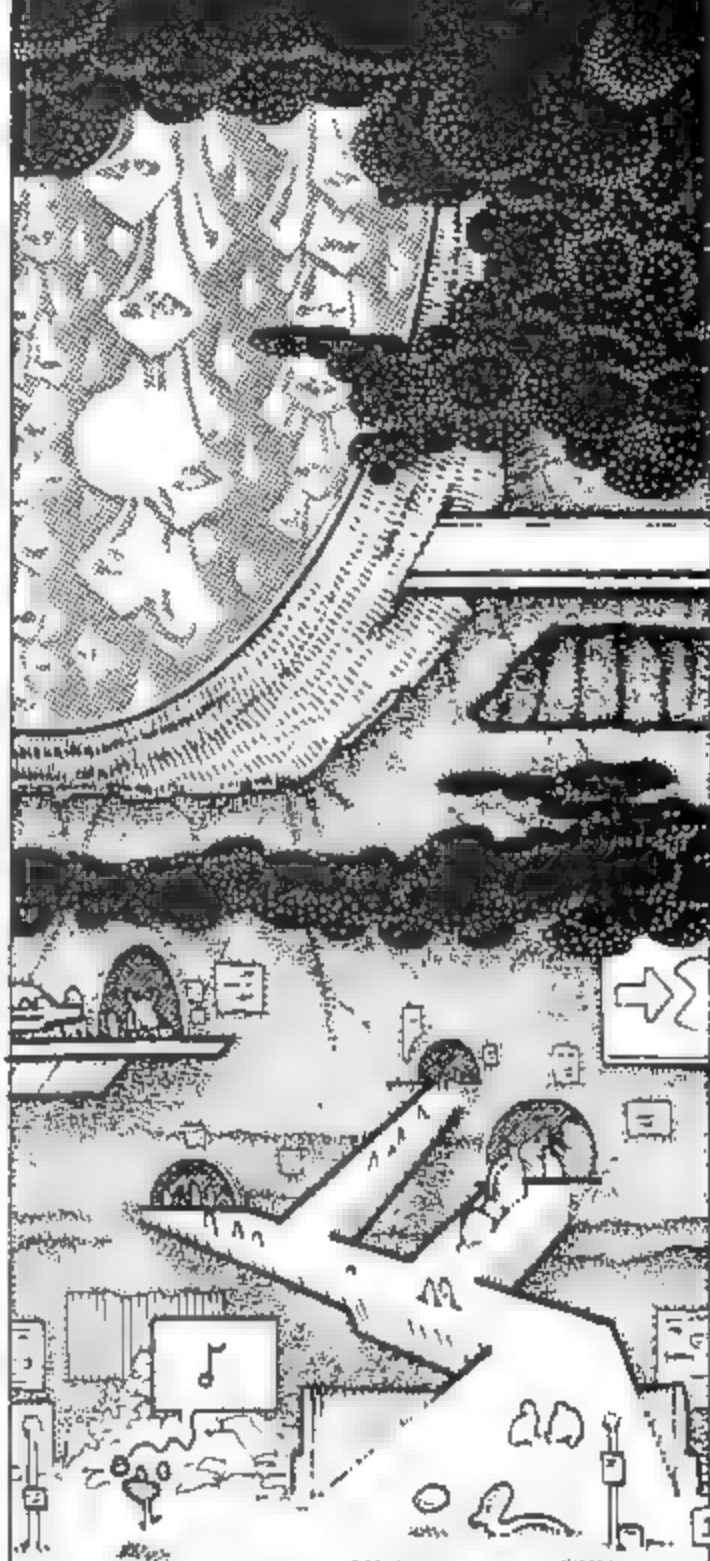


SCALE 019 MINIMETERS

A COLONY SHIP

SLOW

MEANWHILE, IN A VERY EXPANSIVE
RESTAURANT ON A NEARBY
PLANET, A BUSINESS DEAL IS
SHREWDLY REACHING COMPLETION.



ADMITTEDLY, I WOULD NET MORE IF I HARVESTED THIS NOVA MYSELF, CZU, BUT AS IT TURNS OUT, I MUST BE AWAY AT AN ORAGAMI CONVENTION IN VAHN'DEL'YOURGH WHEN THE STAR IS SCHEDULED TO EXPLODE (MY LEAVES ARE TIED.)

MY NECESSARY HASTE DICTATES THAT MY ASKING PRICE BE SO REASONABLE...

TWENTY MEGS IS STILL STEEP, NENA. IT'LL COST KONNY AND I THAT MUCH AGAIN TO RENT A MASS-WEB TO BE ABLE TO HARVEST THE TRANSURANICS.

(EXPEL GAS)-ALL RIGHT, MAKE IT 19.7394, BUT YOU'RE TAKING THE PHLOOG RIGHT OUT OF THE ROOTS OF MY YOUNG.

MAKE IT 19.7391 AND YOU HAVE A DEAL.

...I AM GRATIFIED.

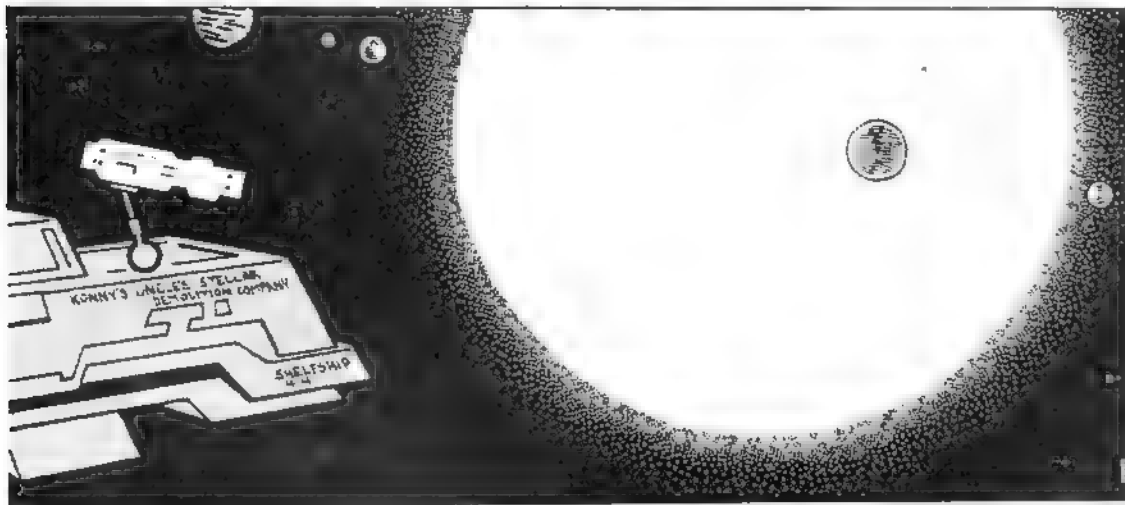
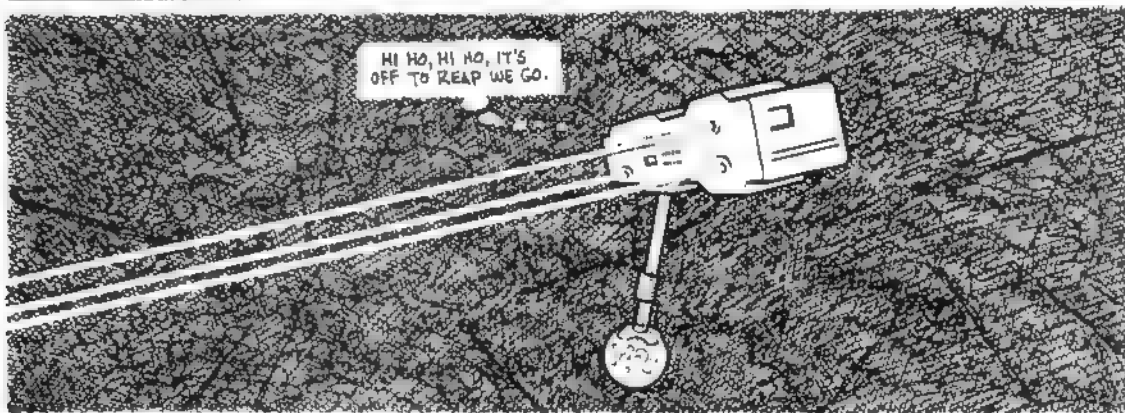
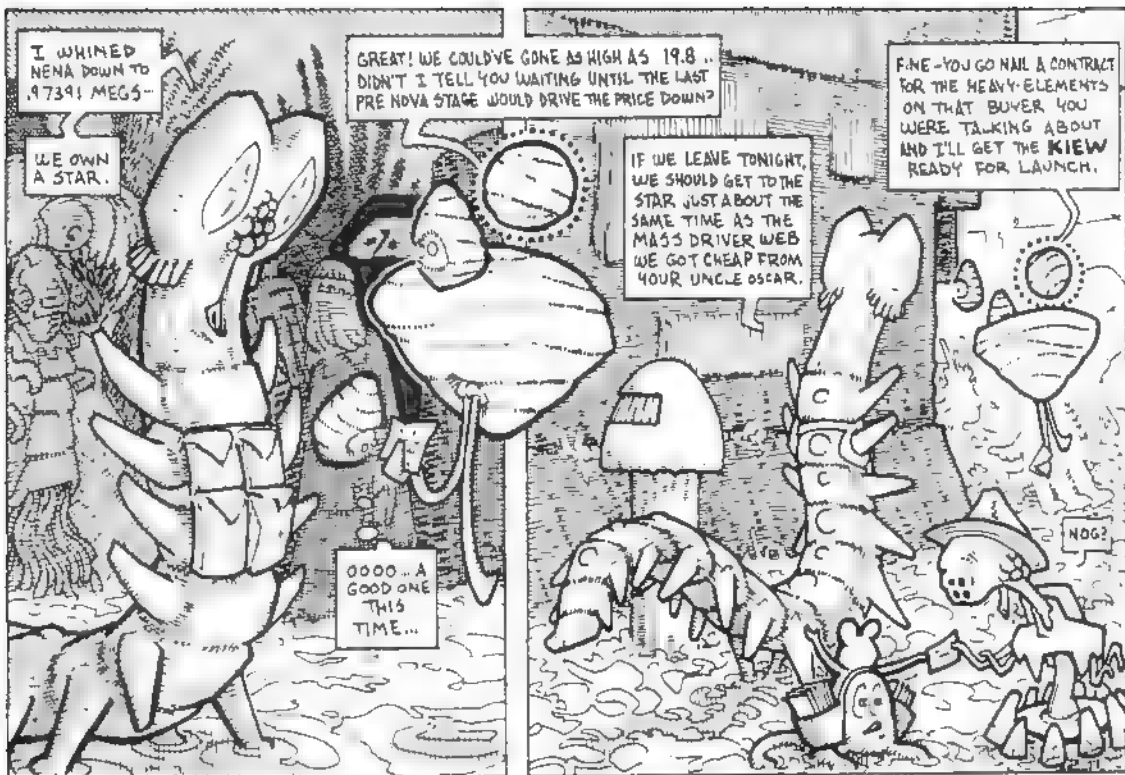
(FOR THAT MUCH MONEY-YOU BETTER BE.)

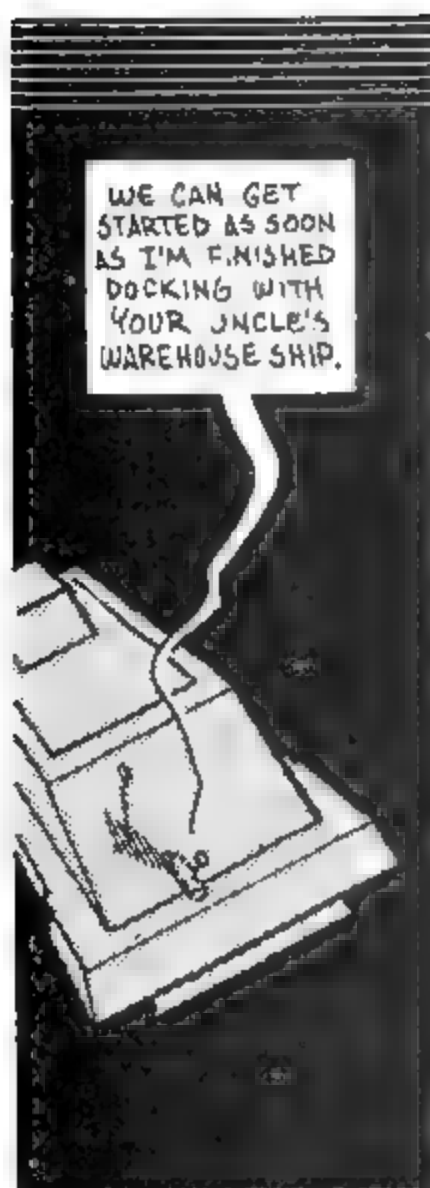
WE CAN USE OUR TABLE'S COMMLINK TO REGISTER THE TRANSACTION WITH POOLTECH.

KONNY-C'MON, WE HAVE OUR WORK NINED-OUT FOR US.

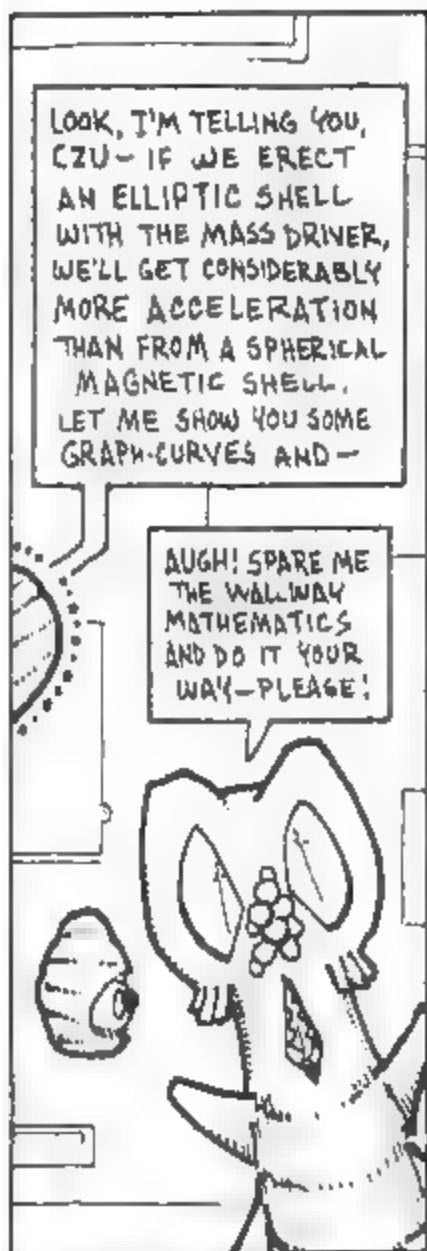
WHAT, ALREADY?

7/8





WE CAN GET
STARTED AS SOON
AS I'M FINISHED
DOCKING WITH
YOUR UNCLE'S
WAREHOUSE SHIP.

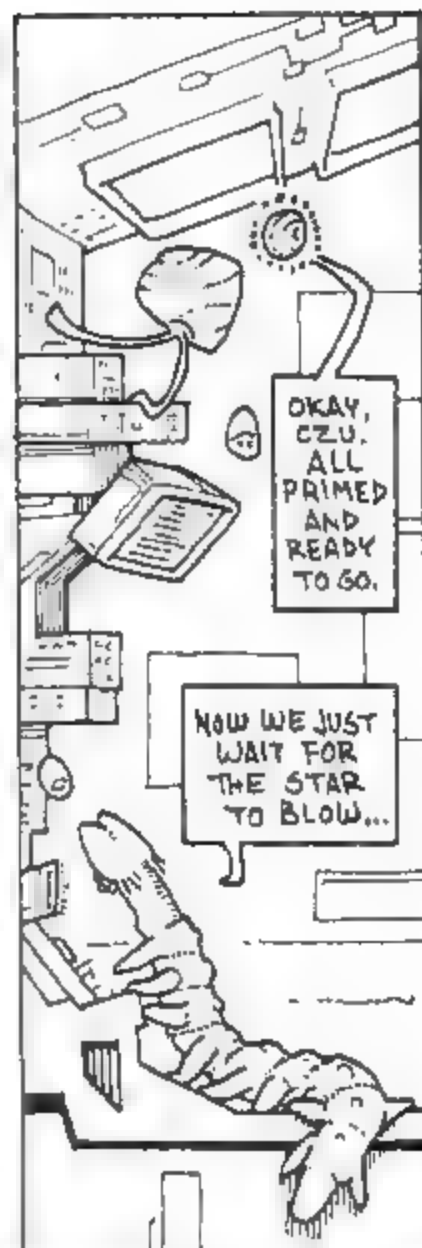


LOOK, I'M TELLING YOU,
CZU- IF WE ERECT
AN ELLIPTIC SHELL
WITH THE MASS DRIVER,
WE'LL GET CONSIDERABLY
MORE ACCELERATION
THAN FROM A SPHERICAL
MAGNETIC SHELL.
LET ME SHOW YOU SOME
GRAPH-CURVES AND-

AUGH! SPARE ME
THE WALL-WAY
MATHEMATICS
AND DO IT YOUR
WAY- PLEASE!

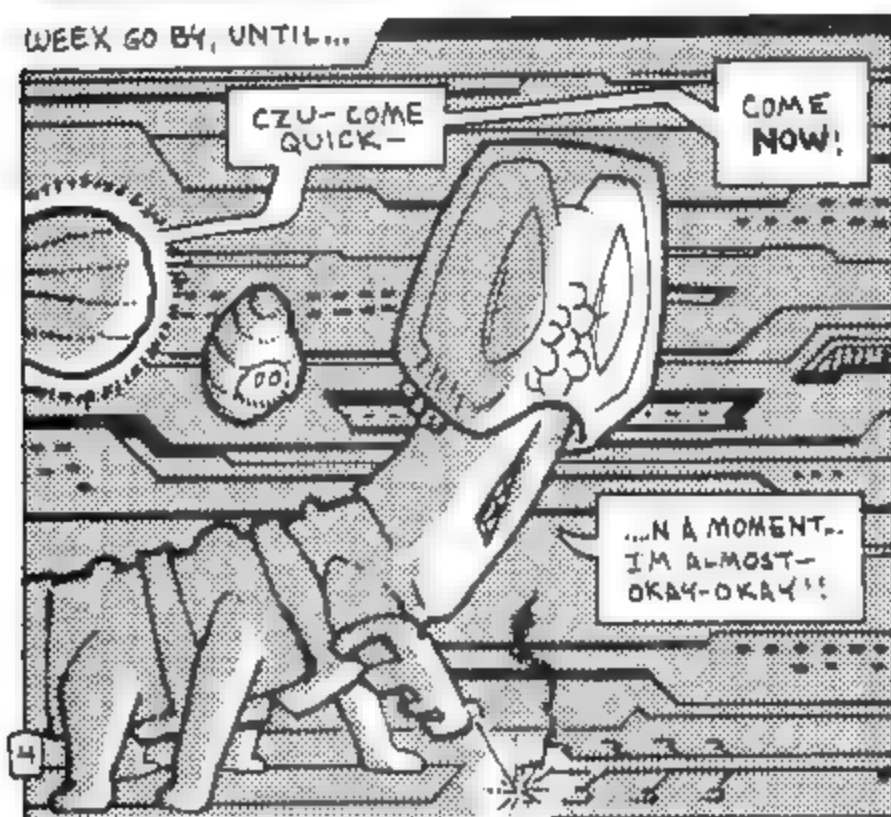
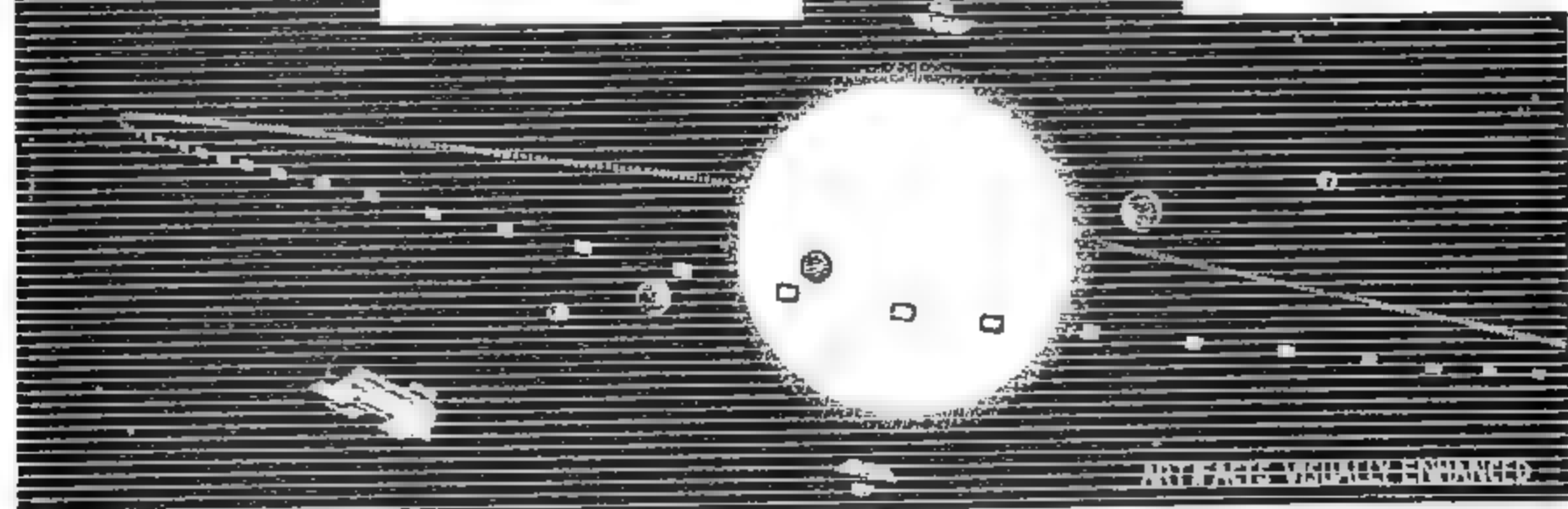


...DISPATCHING
DRIVER DRONES
TO THE LAST
QUADRANT...



OKAY,
CZU.
ALL
PRIMED
AND
READY
TO GO.

NOW WE JUST
WAIT FOR
THE STAR
TO BLOW...

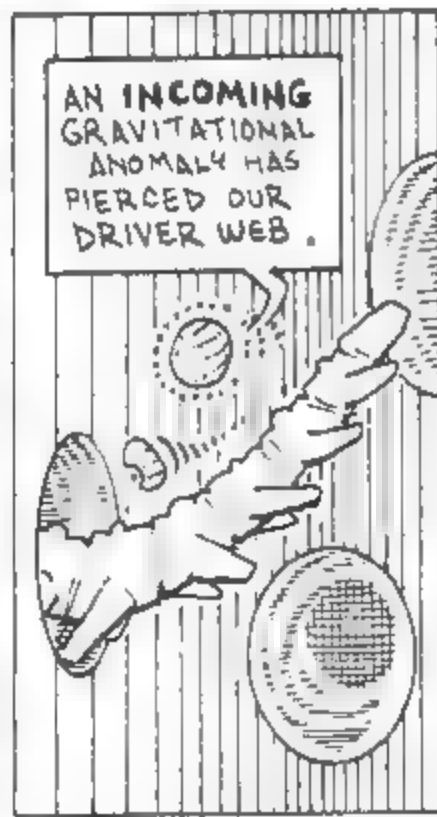


WEEK GO BY, UNTIL...

CZU- COME
QUICK-

COME
NOW!

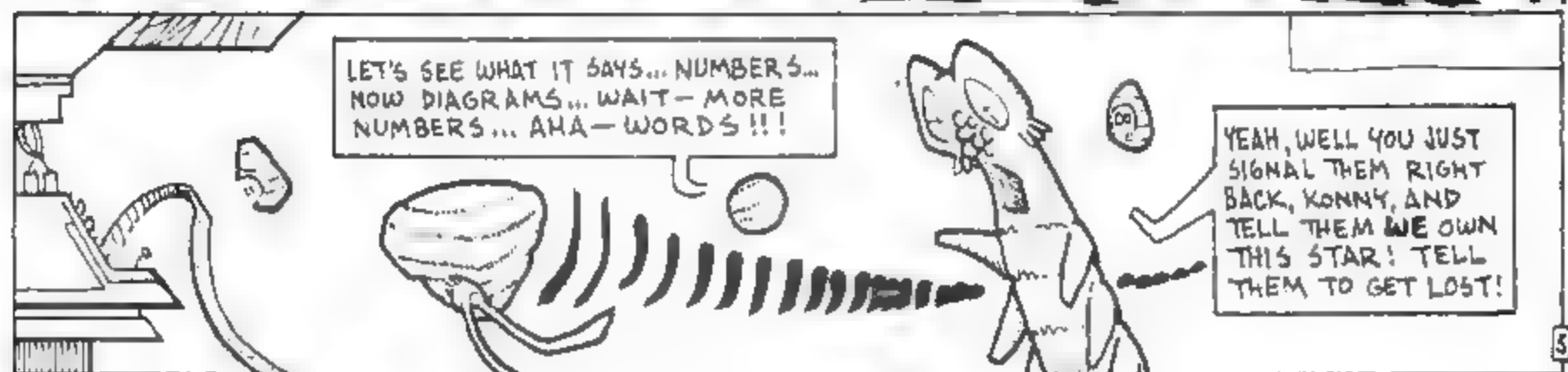
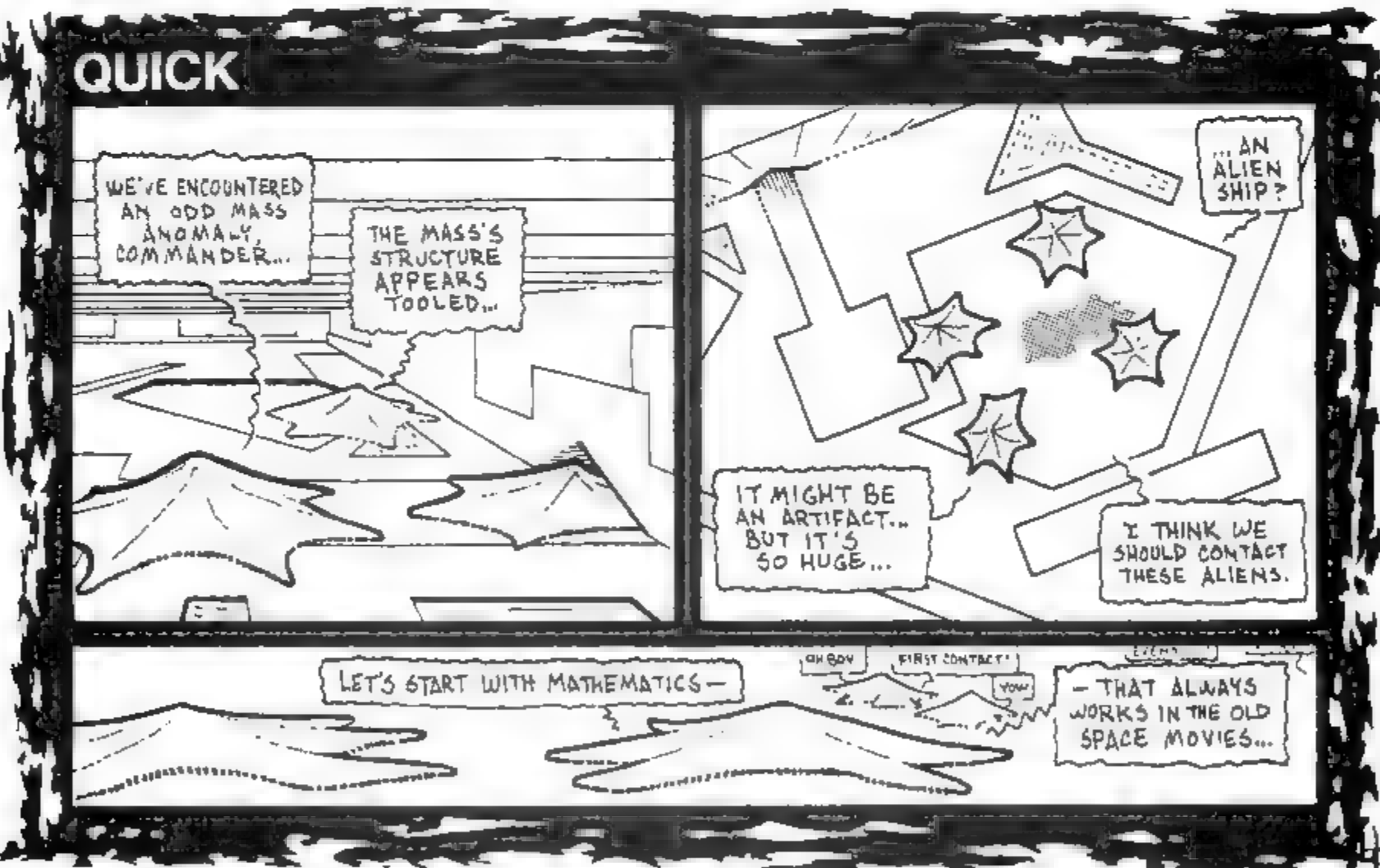
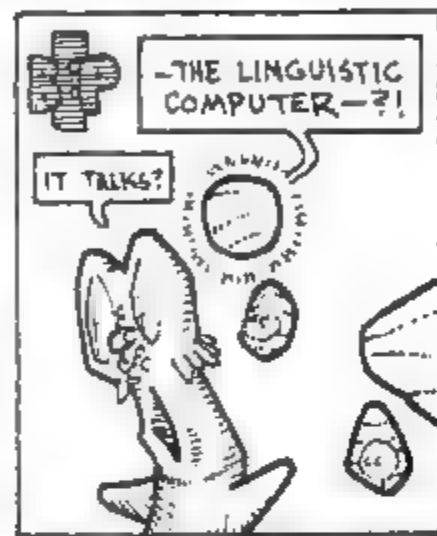
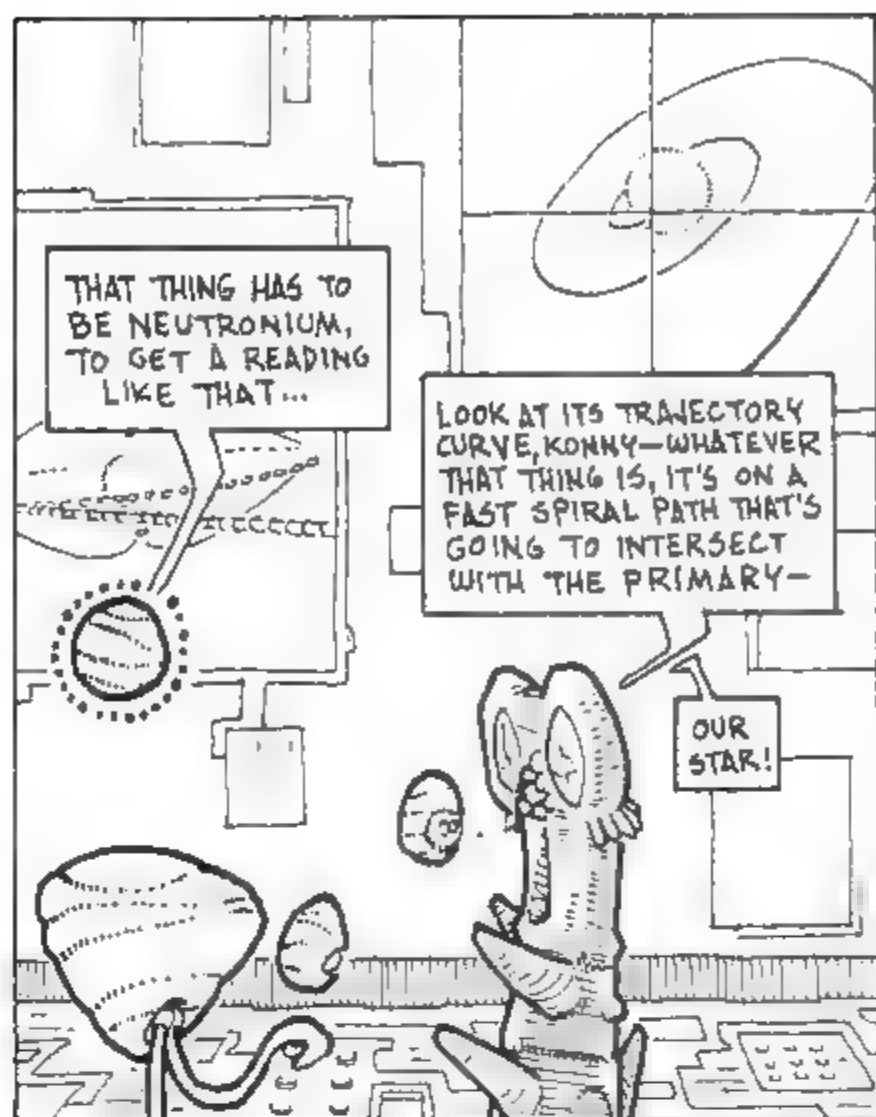
...IN A MOMENT.
I'M ALMOST-
OKAY-OKAY!!

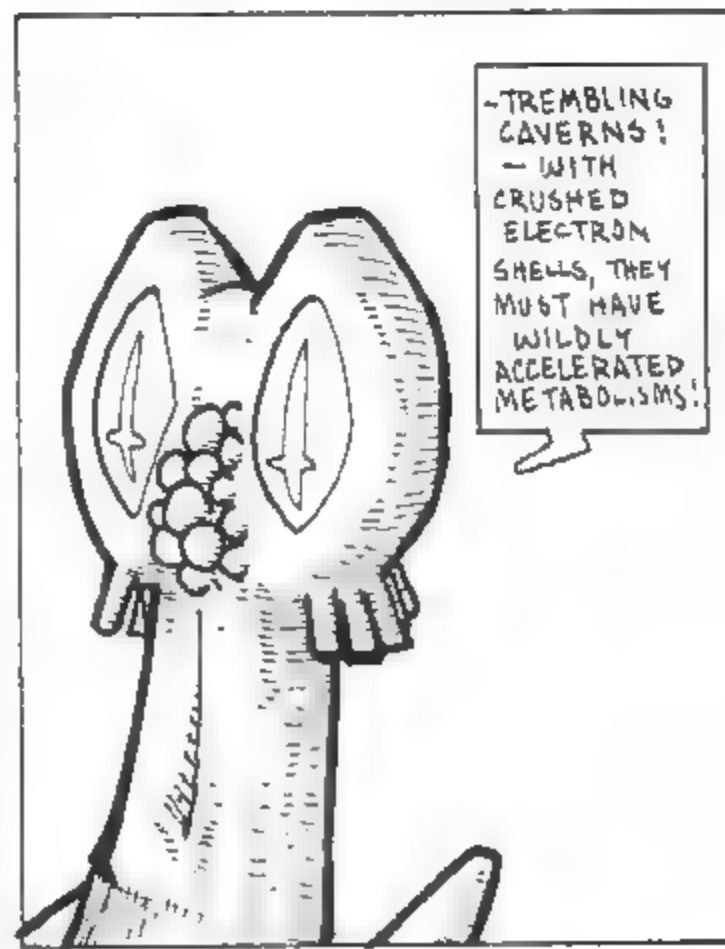
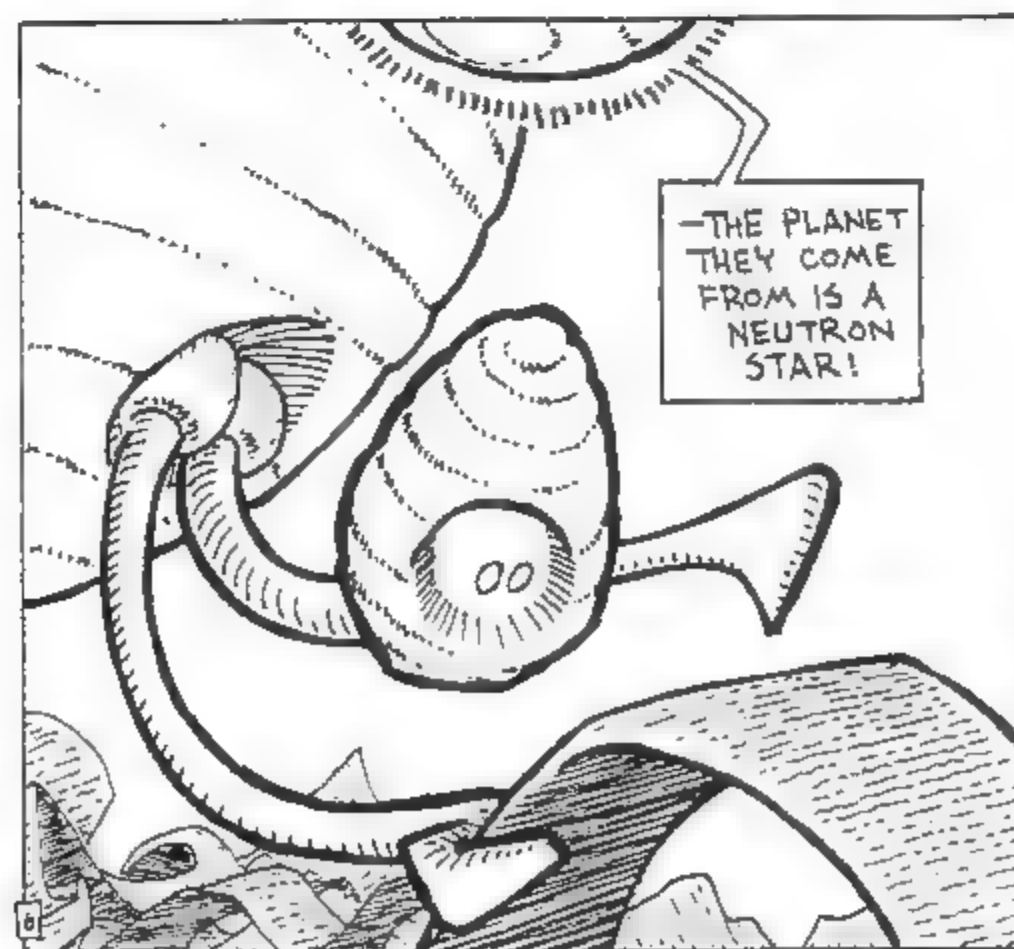
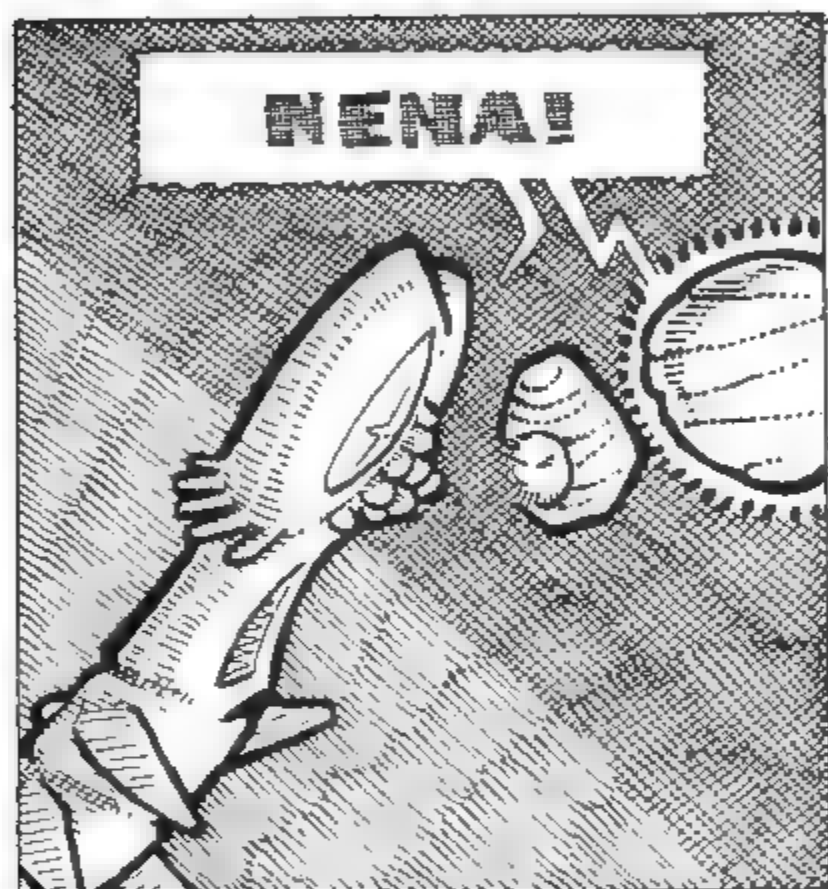
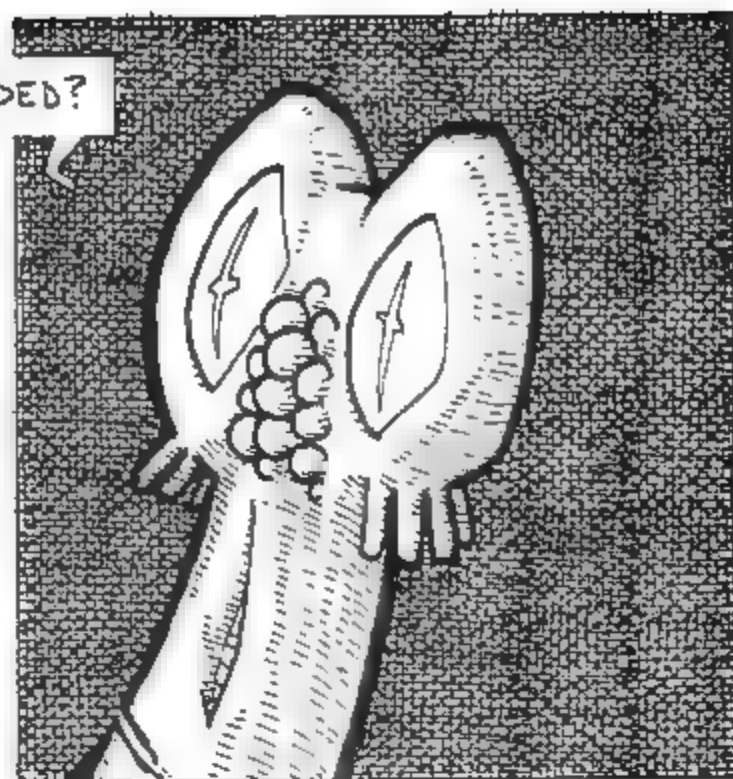


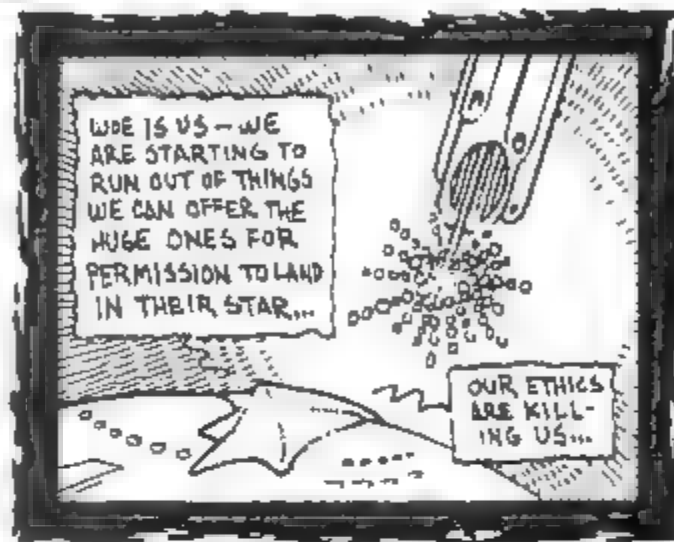
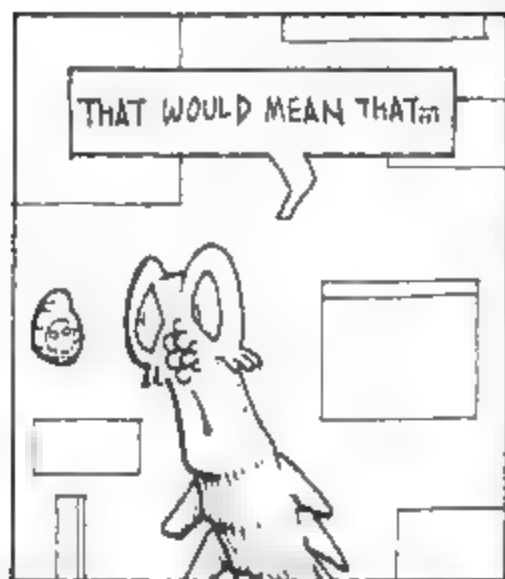
AN INCOMING
GRAVITATIONAL
ANOMALY HAS
PIERCED OUR
DRIVER WEB.



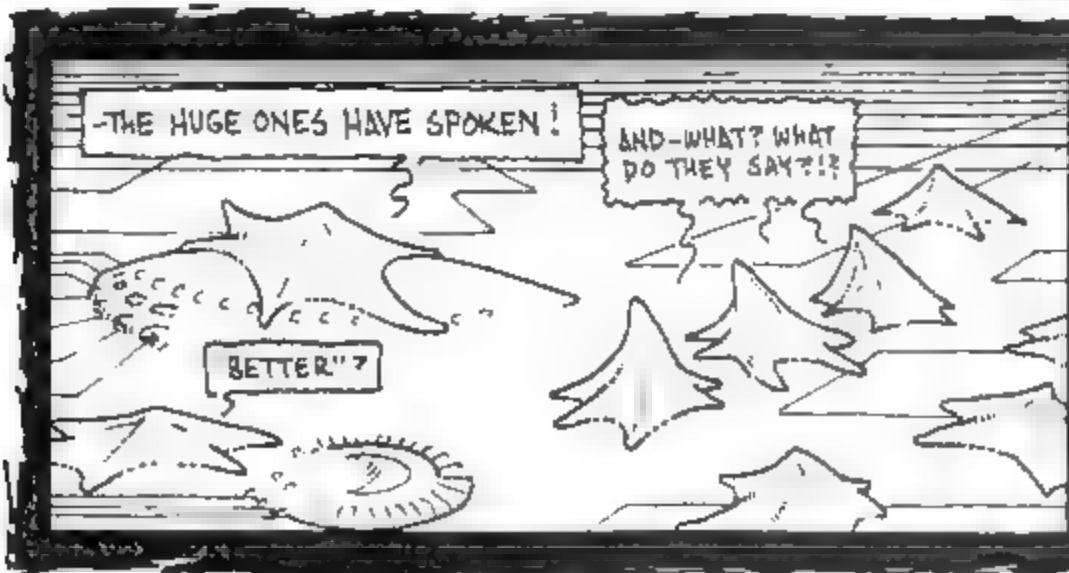
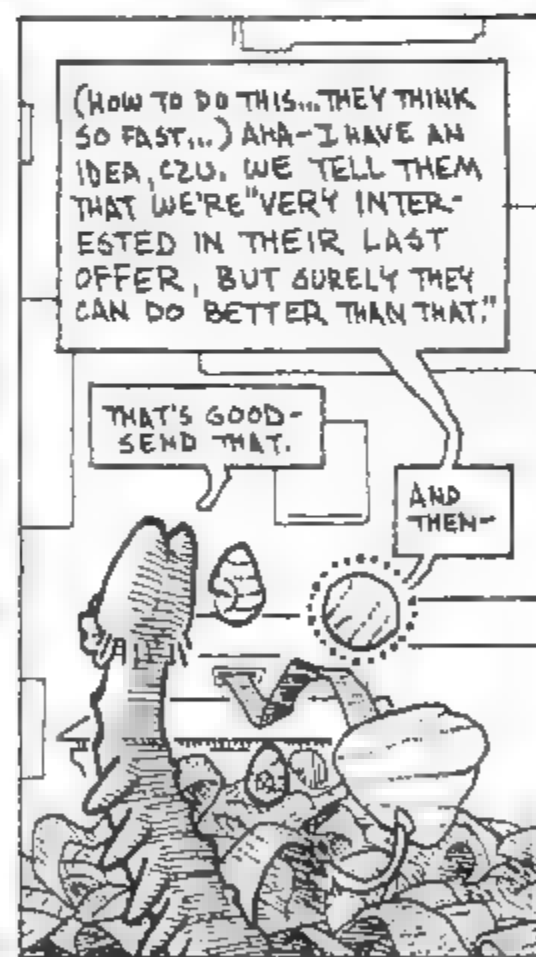
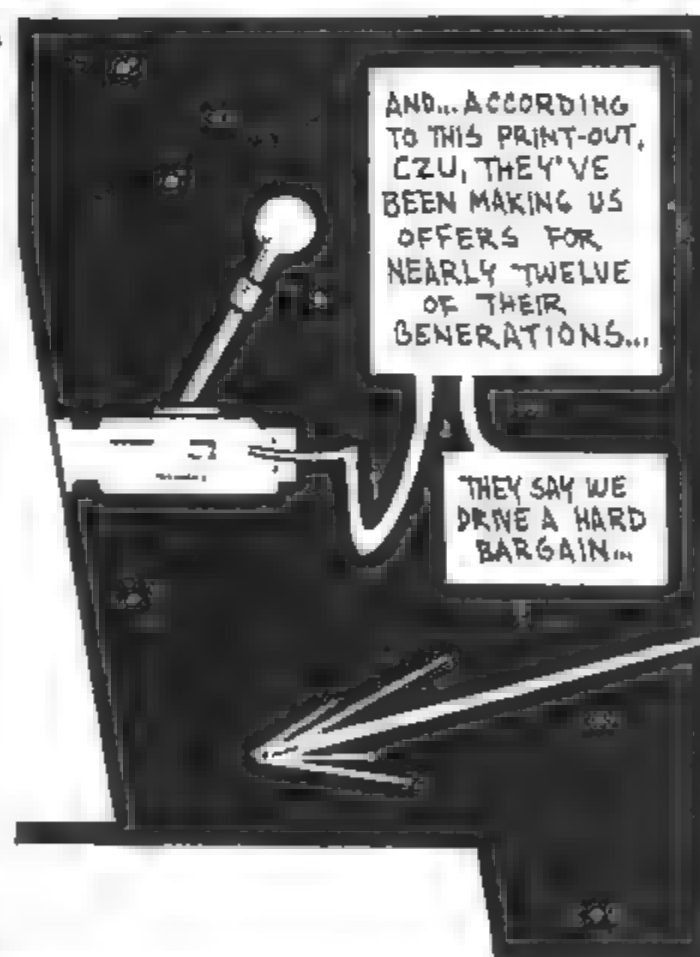
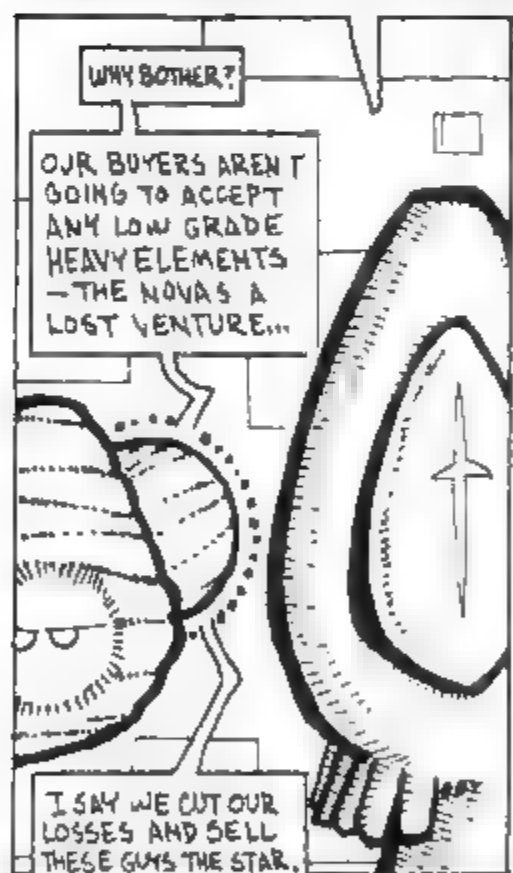
A PARTICULARLY
DENSE MASS
READING TOO.







AND WE HAVE NO WAY TO STOP THEM FROM COLONIZING OUR NOVA!



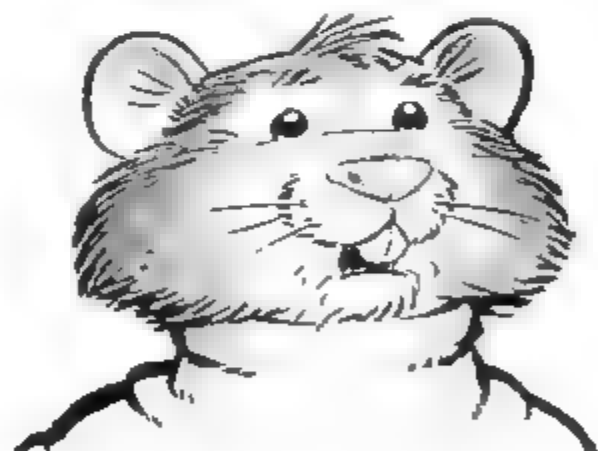
ERMA FELNA, EDF

Colonel Hitzok, Commander of Homeguard Forces, Ekosiak, who only a day earlier had saved Hicho from a terrorist-planted nuclear bomb, now lies wounded in serious but stable condition. He was shot by the same citizens he saved who now protest the military presence in Ekosiak.



2382 54674700

Today, in emergency session, the planetary council is debating special security measures to prevent another attempt at nuclear terrorism.



Anti-militarist activities, and in fact, most of the most vocal factions on all sides have been unusually quiet, probably trying to gauge the public climate.

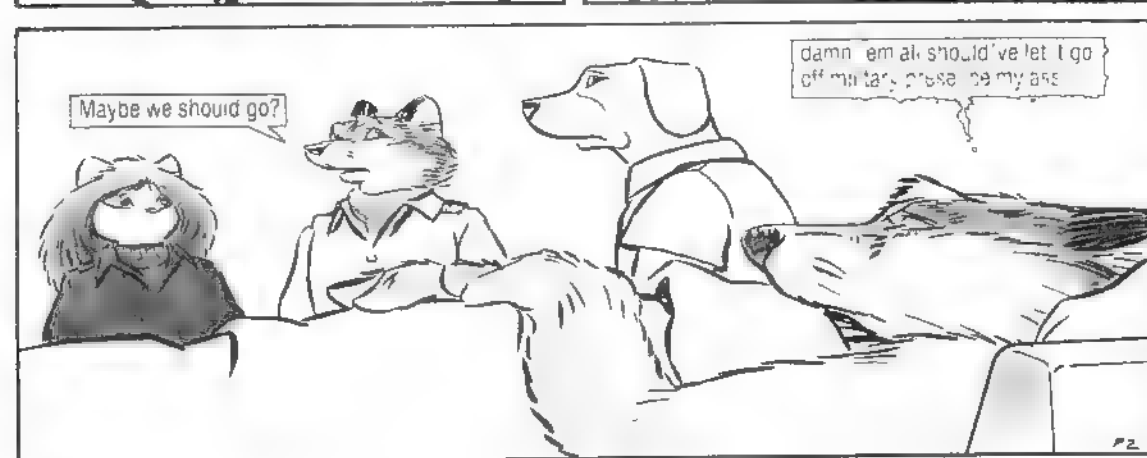
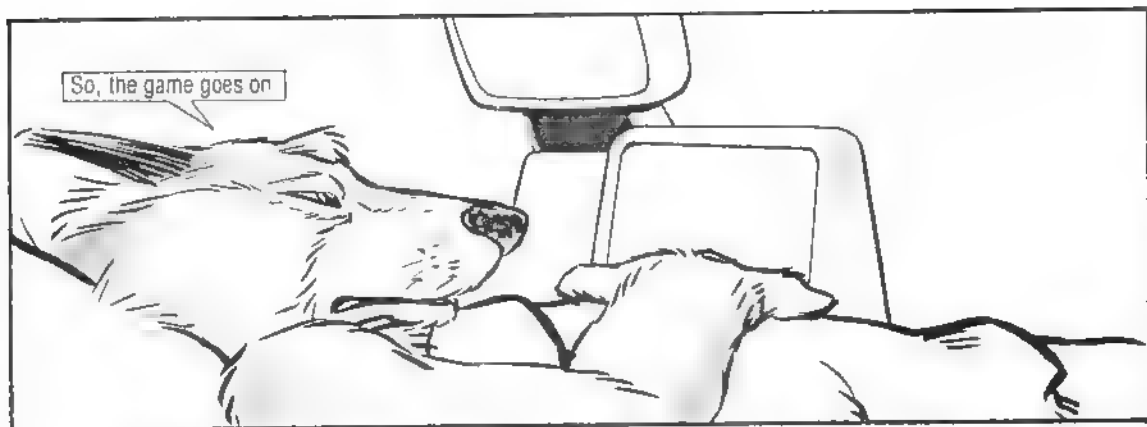


Colonel Jones here. Glad to see the citizenry didn't get the best of you. All the guys down in "special" are out doing follow-ups and ought to have something for you soon.



Security check,
ConfedCentral mission.
All clear.







So, life goes on. Yer goin' back with the lads as if nothin's happened.

In light of my orders, what else would you suggest?



As everyone's noticed, there's trouble brewin'.

I'm just a pilot, an' inna pinch, the Sergeant an' I can keep paperwork goin', but keepin' a lid on a civil crisis...



Uhhh, I wouldn't underestimate your or your Sergeant's skills.

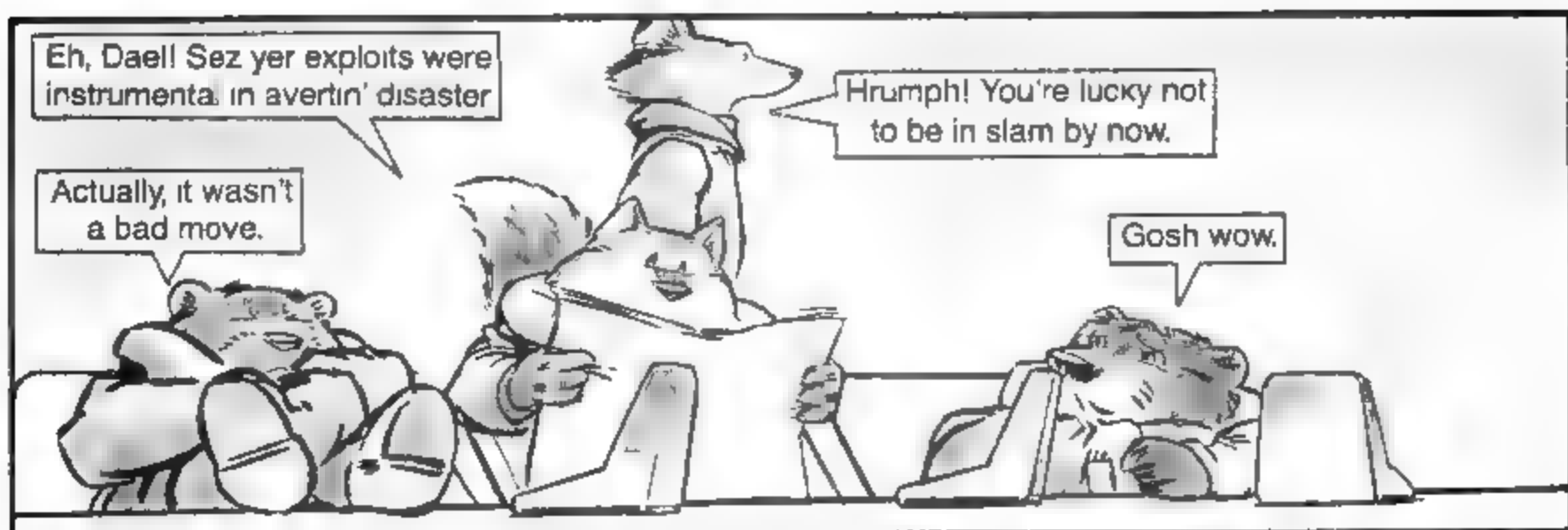


In fact, I suspect Sergeant Tzoquotah's full talents have yet to be appreciated.



Of course, as I've said before, I can give advice on matters of military tactics.

But for now, as you said, I've got to go back to the lads.

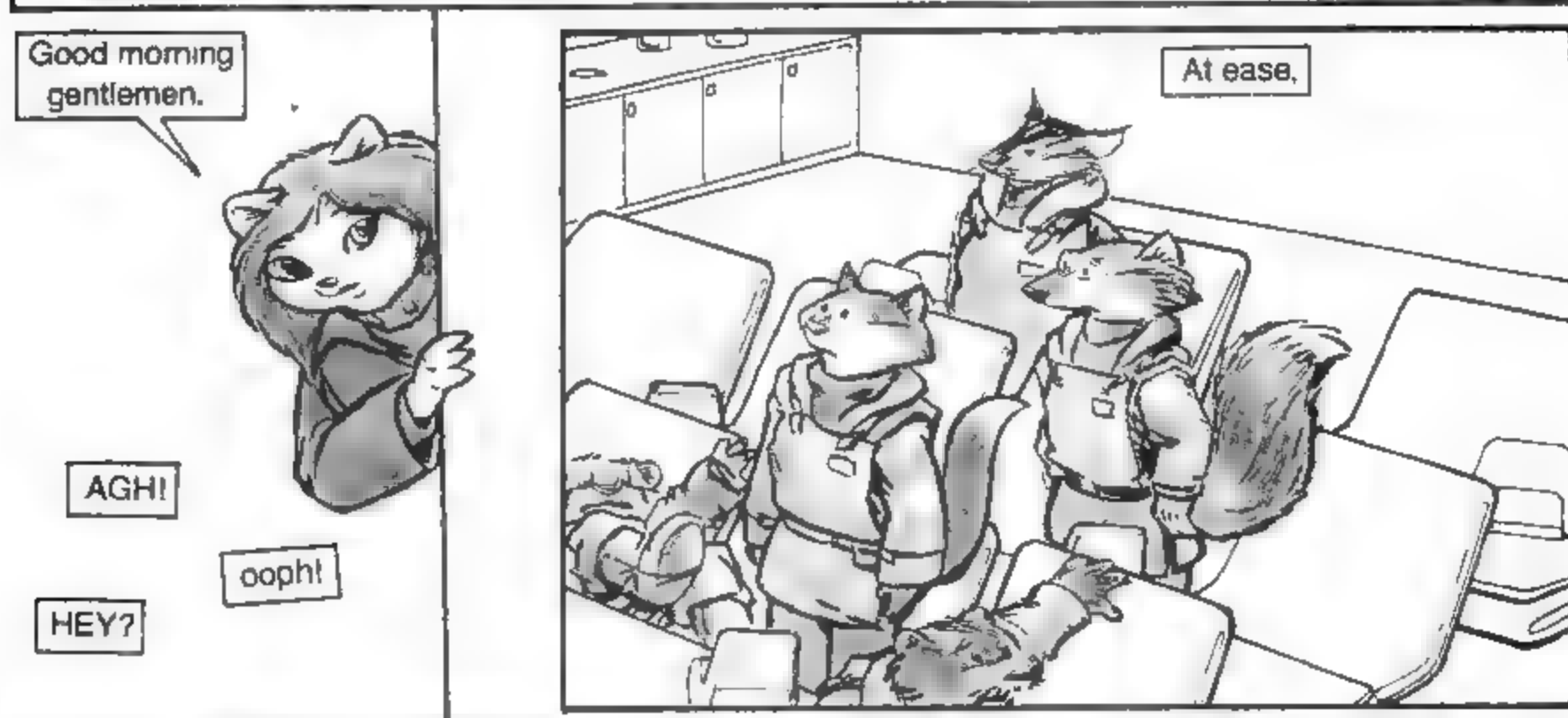


Eh, Daell Sez yer exploits were instrumenta in avertin' disaster

Hrumph! You're lucky not to be in slam by now.

Actually, it wasn't a bad move.

Gosh wow.



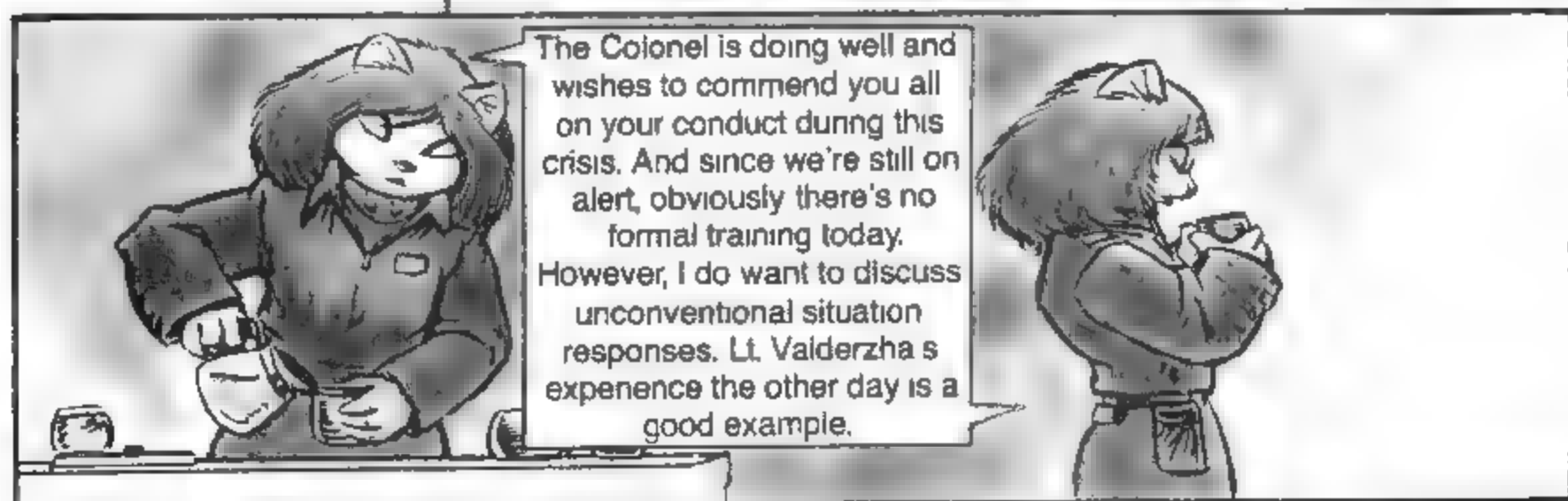
Good morning gentlemen.

At ease.

AGH!

ooph!

HEY?



The Colonel is doing well and wishes to commend you all on your conduct during this crisis. And since we're still on alert, obviously there's no formal training today. However, I do want to discuss unconventional situation responses. Lt. Valderzha's experience the other day is a good example.



He safely dispersed a hostile and somewhat armed mob without inflicting serious injury

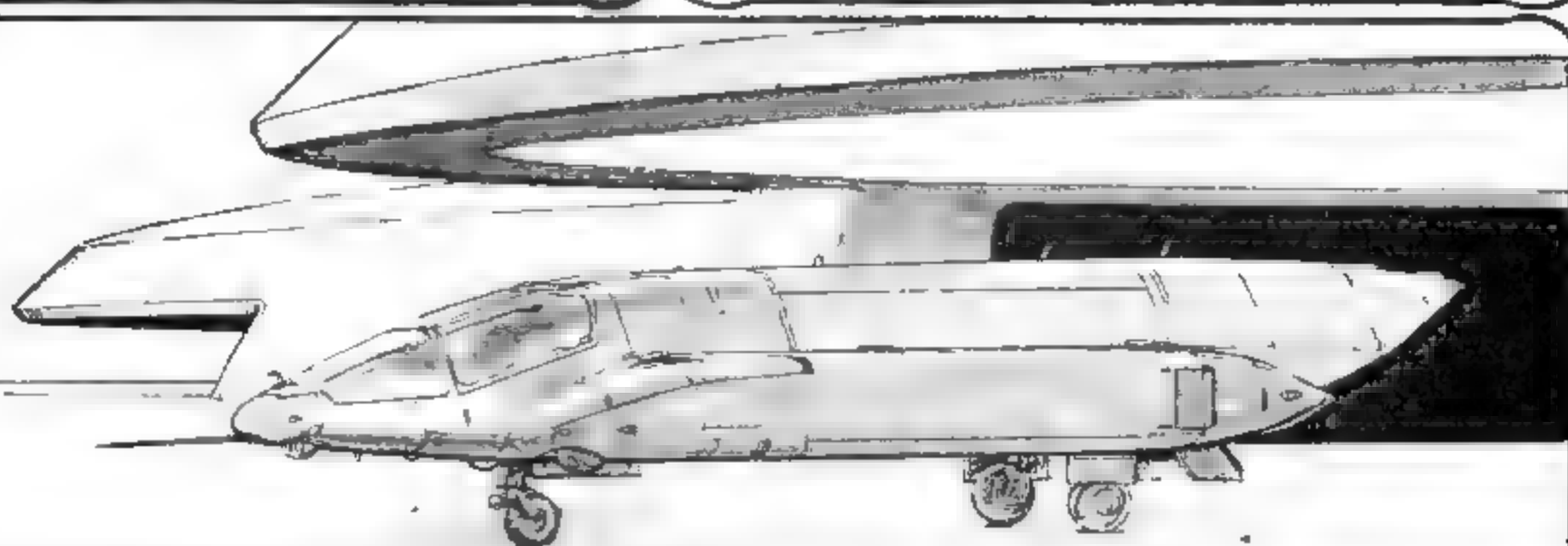
Your timing was good, but only by dumb luck.

Of course, he also made the mistake of not coordinating with ground forces.

Being at the right place at the right time IS important, but so is a properly measured response.



I had a not dissimilar experience. It was back when I was still in advanced training at Danet. I'd passed on a training flight a couple of days earlier and had to do a make-up on an R and R day.



We were flying Aero 3-Cs, derated a bit for training



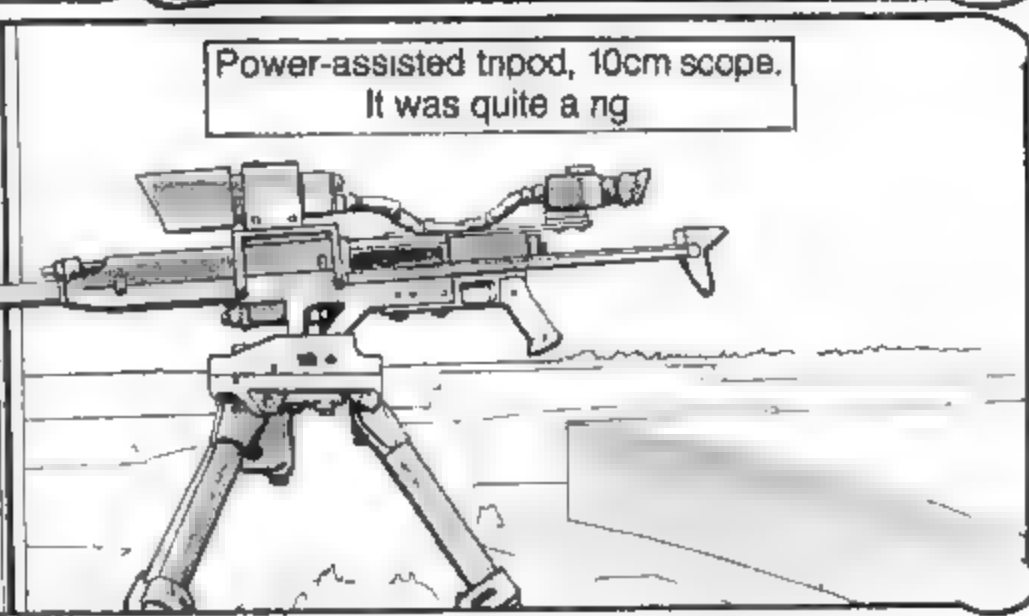
Mission was simple enough, go out to the range and visually laser-spot targets for four hours. Minimal threat environment. Real piece of cake.



Little did I know that a terrorist sniper was setting up in town.



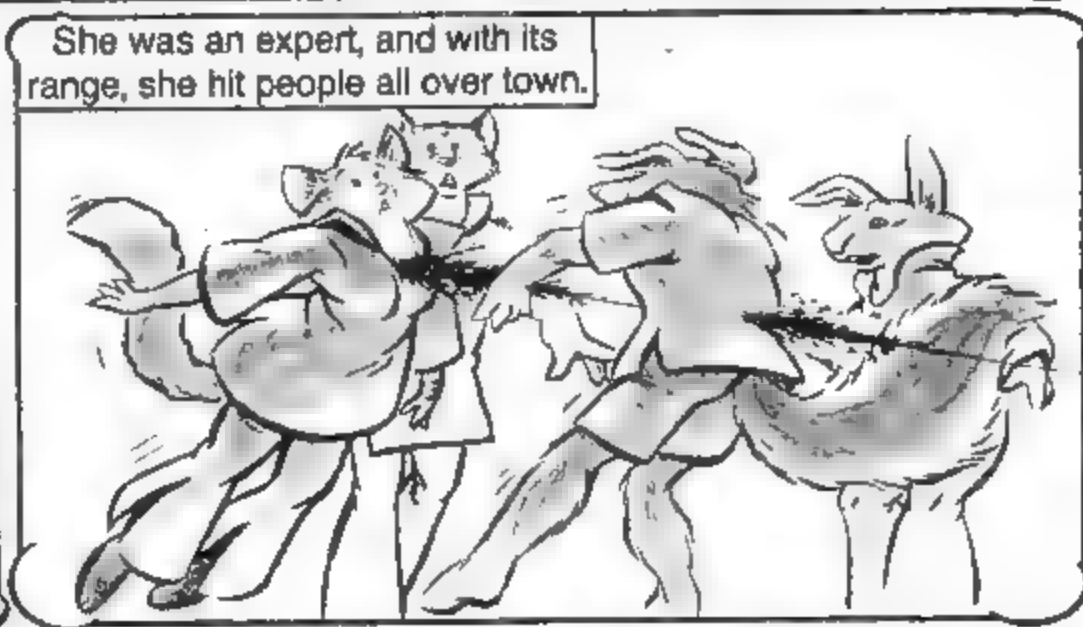
She'd brought in a 10mm L150 electro-automatic rifle and had it in a suite in the one business tower.



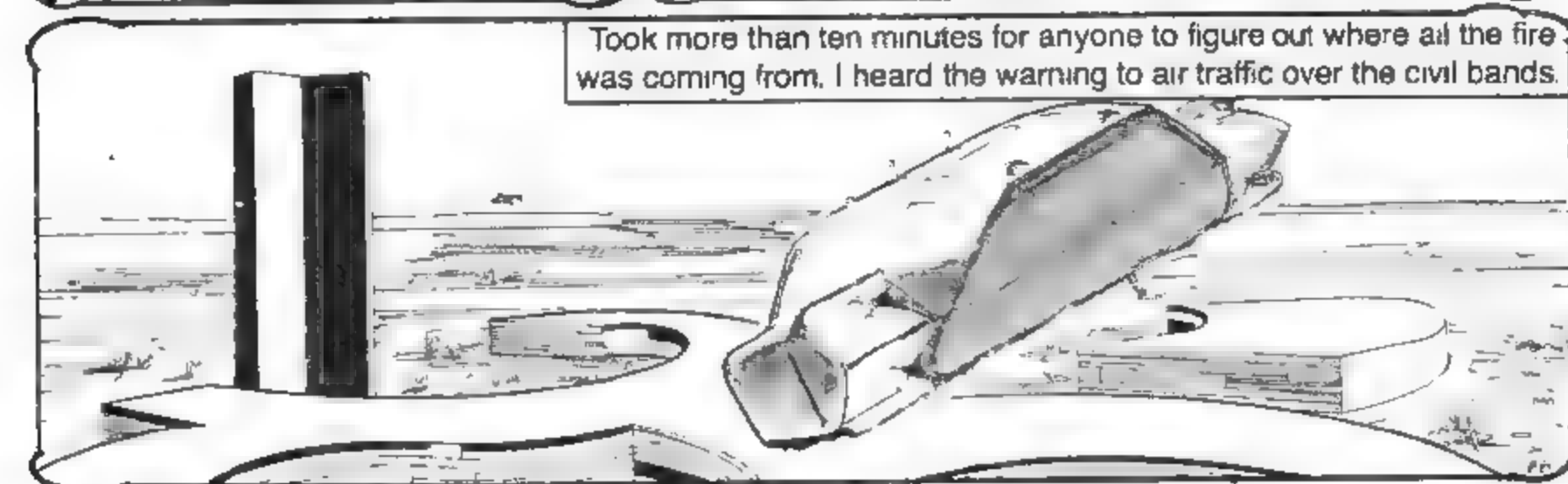
Power-assisted tripod, 10cm scope. It was quite a rig



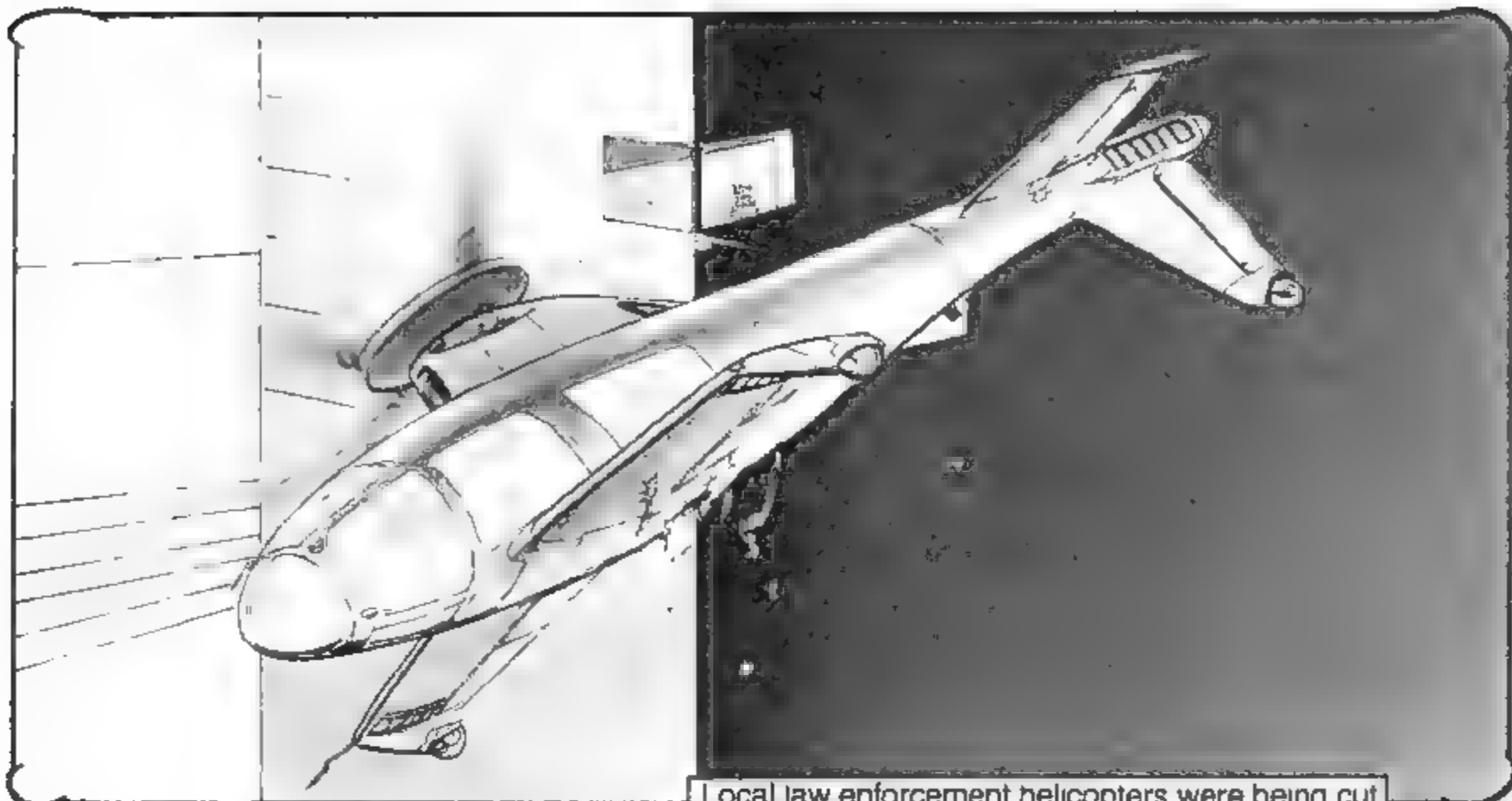
Anyone could hit a target a couple of clicks away with it.



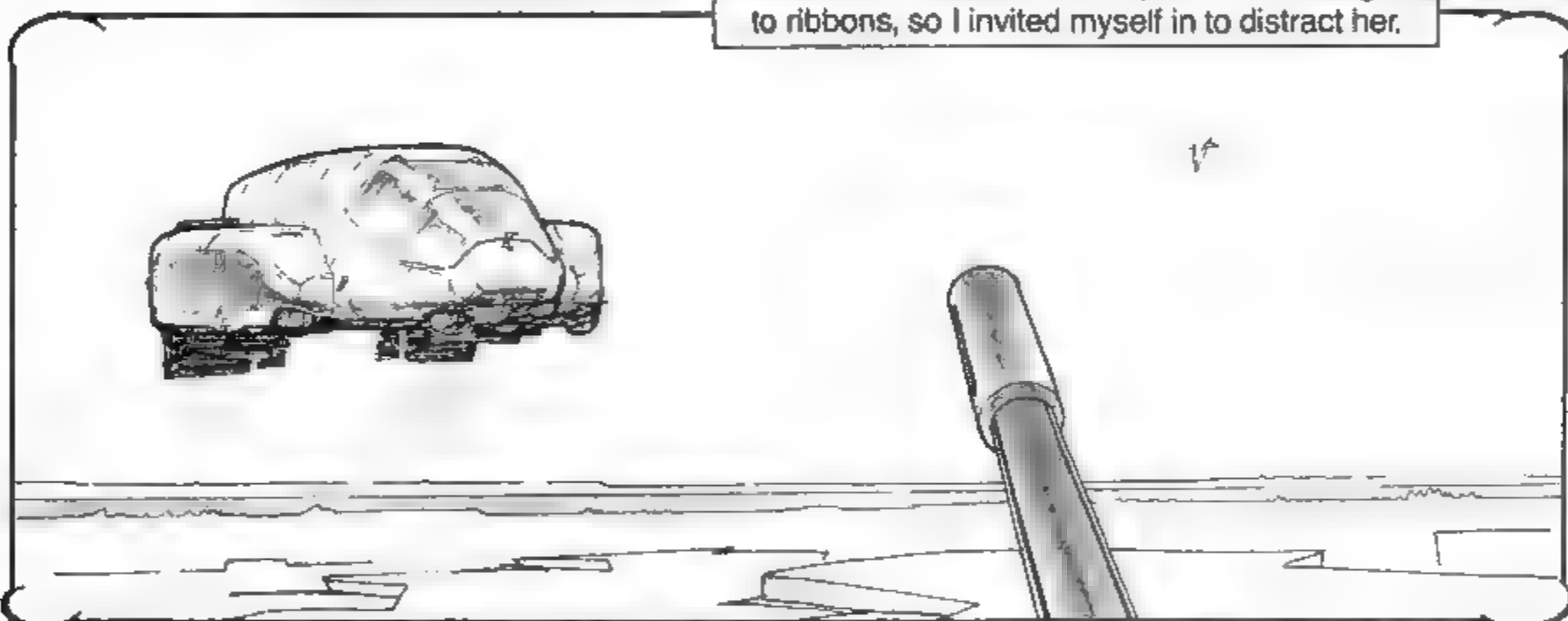
She was an expert, and with its range, she hit people all over town.



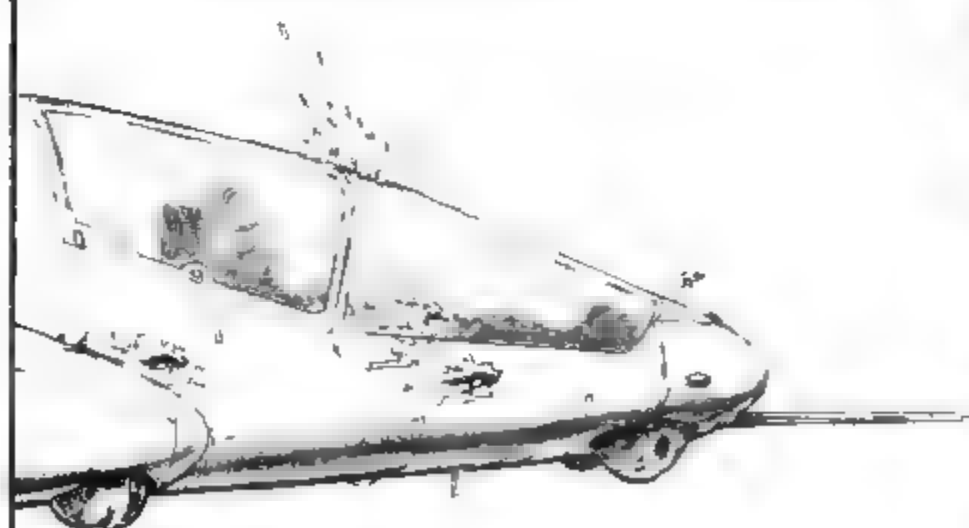
Took more than ten minutes for anyone to figure out where all the fire was coming from. I heard the warning to air traffic over the civil bands.



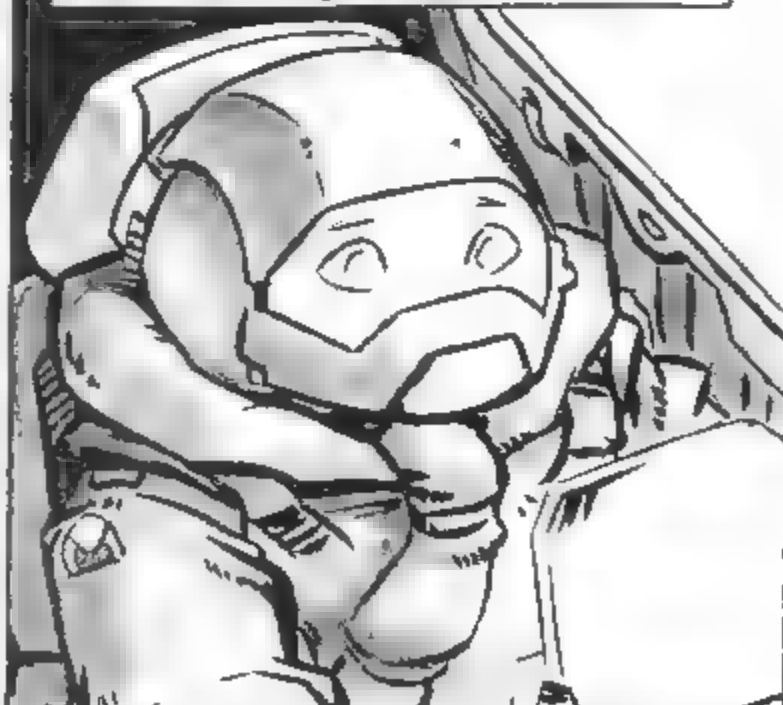
Local law enforcement helicopters were being cut to ribbons, so I invited myself in to distract her.



The cabin was still fully armored, so I wasn't too worried about my personal safety, at least at first.



But she was hitting unarmored parts too, and something important might go.



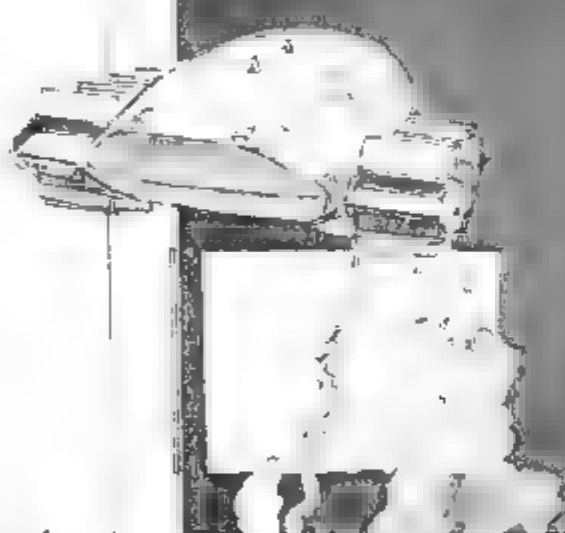
So I had to do something to stop her. But I was unarmed and just as important, unauthorized to intervene in civil actions.

Then I remembered the target-marking lasers.

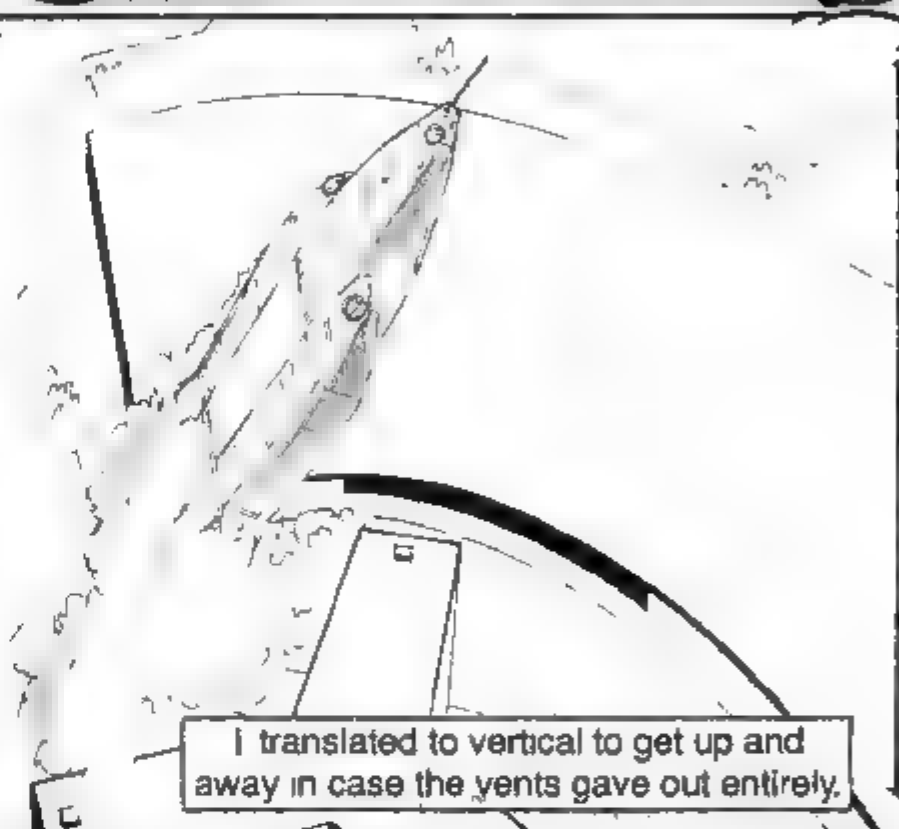
Too low-powered to be a weapon, but more than bright enough to at least temporarily blind someone



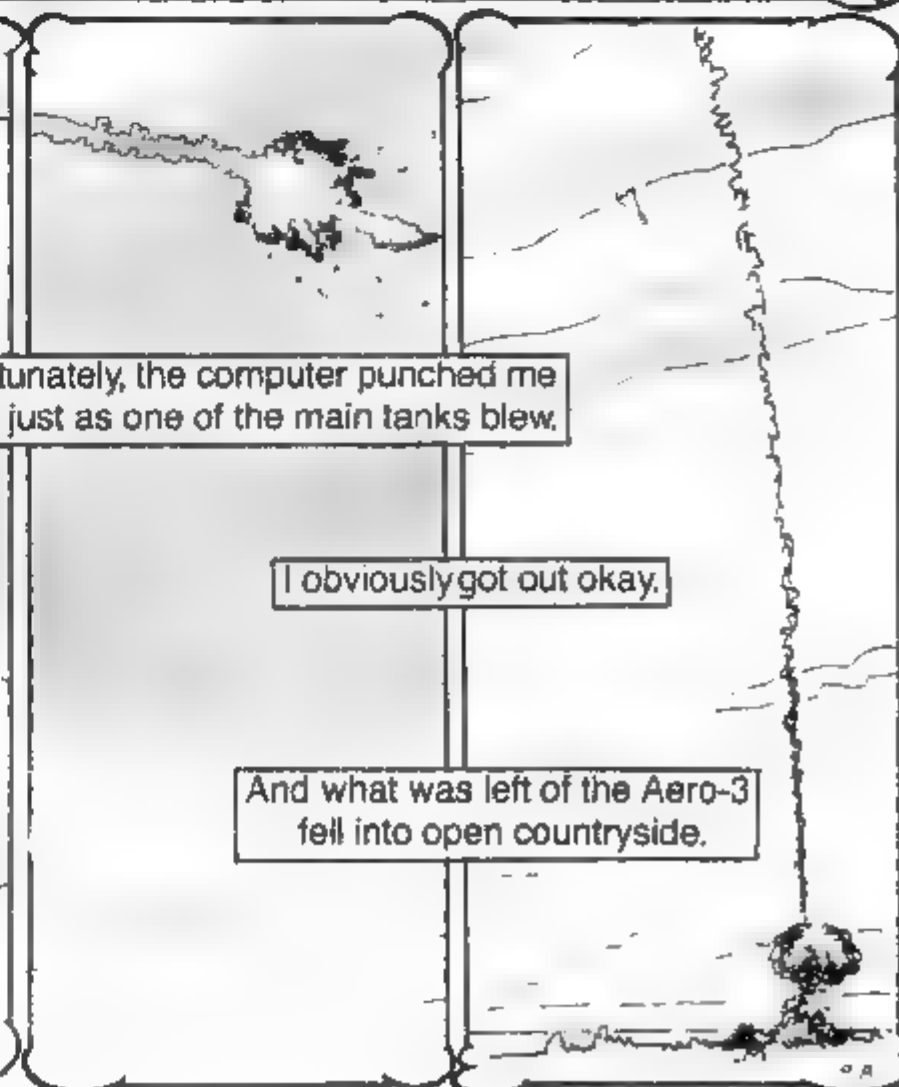
Which was fortunate, because my starboard thrust vents started to go.



I translated to vertical to get up and away in case the vents gave out entirely.



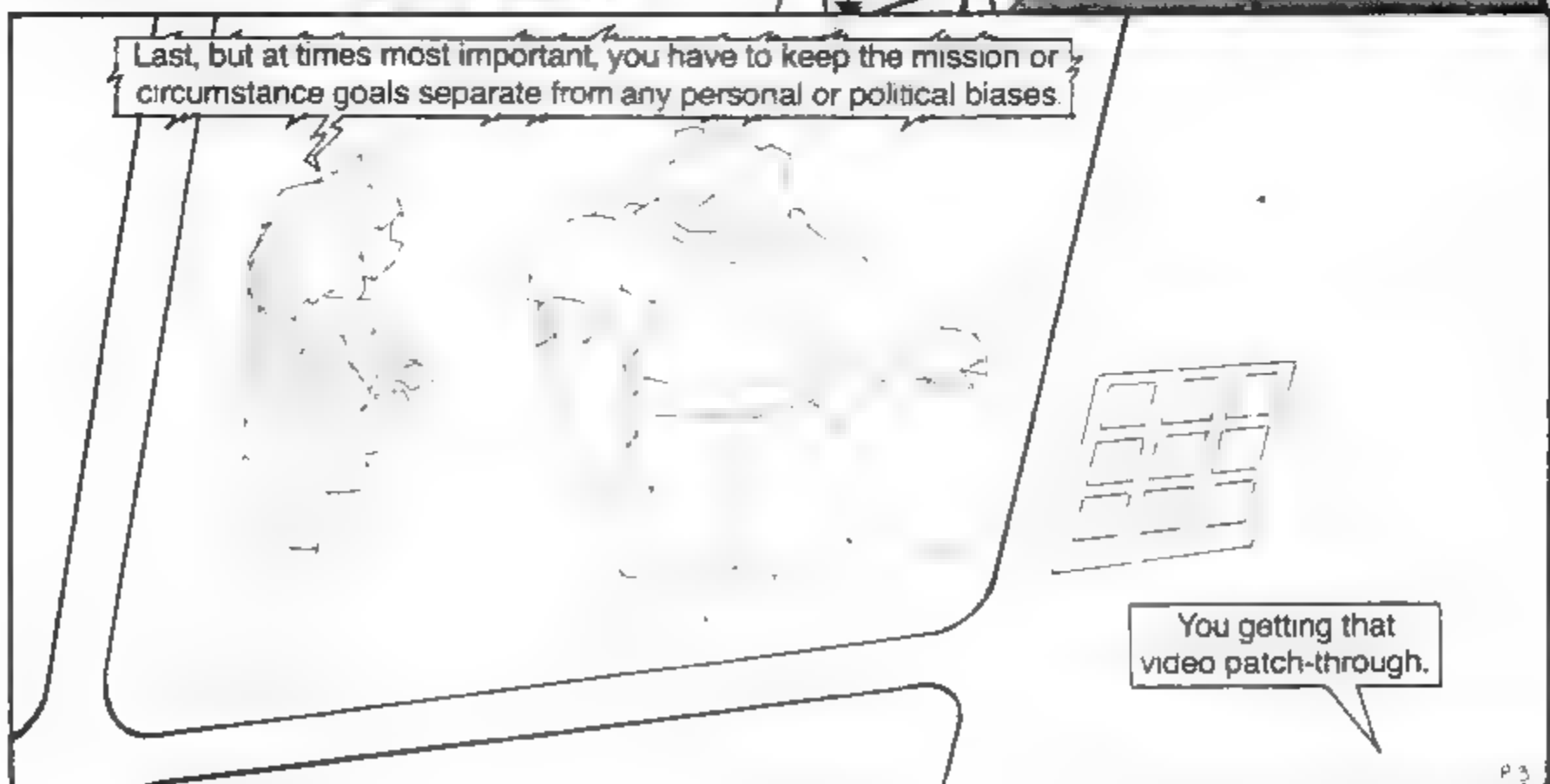
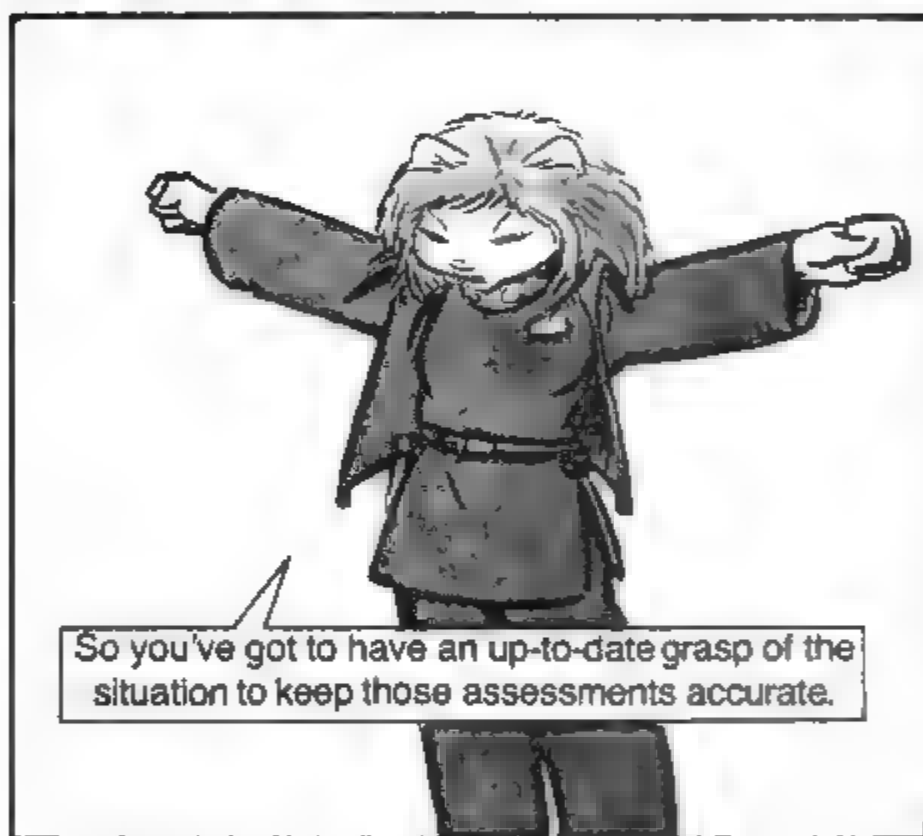
I accumulated as much velocity as possible, hoping to get well away from town before the reactor cut out.



Fortunately, the computer punched me out just as one of the main tanks blew.

I obviously got out okay.

And what was left of the Aero-3 fell into open countryside.



Albedo is one of those things I never expect in the mail, and which always entertains me. Erma Feina's epic isn't exactly funny animals, but too serious to fall into that category, but who says anthropomorphics has to be all grins and giggles? I think I go for the techno/SF angle, though I'm a notorious furvert, always did like ladies of the feline purrsuasion. To me, there's a good balance of story elements: drama, pathos, wry humor, low and high intrigues, and lots of technical stuff for me to sink teeth into. Thus far you've avoided the sordid Heavy Metal megaviolence/sex/cynicism/doom 'n' gloom, and I hope you'll continue to do so. I won't touch HM, but I subscribe to Albedo and that should tell you something. HM is glossy and professional, and is invariably very depressing; Albedo has a bit of heart, a sense of story-to-be-told, characters I can relate to and like, it's reasonably neat, simple and unpretentious. I liked Elfquest for many of the same reasons; no closet elf, me, I'm a centaur at heart, I just like good art, good characterization and good solid story-telling.

Sakai's Usagi Yojimbo may or may not be a glimpse into medieval Japanese culture, I'm not up on these things. I like his style of drawing, very neatly inked line art and critterly folks, and the sly bits of humor stuck into the nooks and crannies. West Coast correspondence chum and cohort in fantasy and mythical folks, Melody Rondeau, remarks that she found the presence of the human a bit jarring. Guess I did too. I assume the creator has his reasons. Anyway, for samurai drama, it's nice stuff.

Back to your feature piece. I like the technical/hardware angle. The space warfare tactics made me stop and think a bit, it all feels right, gives me a sense that as long as one has to cope with inertia, such maneuvers would tend to create a battle theatre to encompass entire solar systems, and be fought in periods of weeks and months, rather than minutes and hours as the usual aerial and naval maneuvers are usually done. Energy and inertia always rear their obstinate little heads when you're in a hurry and have to change your mind — and can't, at .15c and above.

Given the state of cybernetics, such warfare could extend to interstellar ranges and be fought in the timeframe of years and decades, well beyond the endurance of a biological crew. Is that done in your universe, or are technology and economic limits precluding that?

A megaton in a beer keg? Hmmm. . . . I doubt any small group could manage the technical expertise to do that in such a small package. Quick and dirty kilotons with plutonium is probably not too difficult, but fusion devices require more than that. To function efficiently, those things have to be built just so, and you have to understand high-speed kinetics and such to ensure that it doesn't go messily pop all over the block instead of boom all over the city. I'd guess this group gets their technical assistance from a bigger brother somewhere. Nice trick, to use a hypervelocity weapon to fragment it before it can detonate correctly. Not guaranteed, and I'm not willingly volunteering to stand within a hundred feet with a foam unit to hose the dust down, but sometimes you gotta do what has to be done. . . . Nice piece of drama.

Damon Hill
Atlanta, GA

The capability is there for drawn out running battles. Most "manned" vessels have resources to last up to several years in emergency. Autonomous combat vehicles could operate for as long as fuel and ordinance held out. In fact, with the thermal isotope power supplies for their main processors, they could, at least, remain "conscious" for decades. It just hasn't happened yet. As for nuclear terrorism in Erma's scenario, with hundreds of independent mining and manufacturing facilities out in that end of space, and two centuries of nuclear and even post-nuclear technology, all it would take to assemble a thermonuclear device of respectable sophistication would be the time, money, and will to do so. Not unlike the situation now, where any gunsmith could, with sufficient motivation, make a machine gun that would be the envy of even the biggest arms manufacturers of a century ago.

Well, congrats on getting Albedo #5 out, and on getting near the break-even point. It's been a bit hectic over here until I called you. No all-nighters, but I did stay up whenever I was really getting somewhere, and that was often.

Albedo #5 . . . Several words come to mind, like timely. The idea of nuclear terrorism is something that gives the State Dept. nightmares. And your idea on how to defuse one may have some merit to it. Speed is probably very important, so in real life, you might see a rail-gun used with a dumb, diamond tipped, armor piercing shell. If memory serves me right, GE was working on a generator capable of supplying the high voltage DC required to operate one. I just hope someone does some experimenting on this issue before we really need it. It was also rather interesting how you handled the inter-species relations and emotions in the issues so far.

Now as for those drawings of Erma, "in the fur," a little bit risqué, perhaps, but not nasty. In the first issue of Albedo, you said "be tasteful, literate, and well illustrated sex and death and rock and roll," and that is what you did. It appears to fit right into the storyline, and not done to satisfy a few. Anyone with an open mind shouldn't have any problem with it. Besides which, it is your first amendment right, and I've seen almost as bad on TV. (I just can't remember which network.)

True, you may not have done enough pre-planning on this one, but it doesn't take away THAT much from Albedo #5. I also have been guilty of poor planning on occasion, and yes, it has blown up in my face. I will encourage you to keep at it on Albedo, and your Critters project, just as I would anyone trying to make a pet project work. If you don't feel real comfortable with this issue of Albedo, you at least should feel moderately so. As for those who don't care about the reproduction details, how do they expect you to put out a quality magazine if you don't???

David A. Crawford
Raleigh, NC

I originally thought out the story years ago, and was pleased to see a recent news bit that mentioned a special anti-nuclear terrorism team exists, and they have provision for shaped-charge demolition devices to deal with the same sort of things in my story.

Nr. 5 was great. The politics of *Erma Felna* are better thought-out than any other similar SF comic I've seen in a long time. The graphics are great, too — what you're doing reminds me of Matt Wagner's *Mage* in terms of tone and shading (and that's high praise; I think *Mage* is the best-looking color comic published today).

Stan Sakai's *Nilson Groundthumper* was so-so; I liked *Usagi Yojimbo* more. I wonder how many people here in America caught the joke in Tomoe Ame's name? Sakai's little touches, like the worksong in nr. 3, the *tsubo* on Usagi's and the ninja's *katana* in nr. 4, and the clothing and attitudes in general, make *Usagi* a treat to read.

Thanks, too, for the paper quality. Your style is such that a cheaper, less white paper would severely detract from the shading technique you use. I for one am happy to shell out the two bucks for *Albedo*; it's worth it.

Eric Sadoyama
Berkeley, CA

Thanks again for another reprofan!

Just thought I'd drop you a line to say thanks for your support of this past Loscon weekend. No one ever promised an easy transition from "Raving Fan" to "Pro," but they also never told me it was going to be so hard on my ego (and patience). Anyway, the manner in which you and Ken and Lela accepted an unannounced table guest and, in fact, helped to smooth his bruised pride as the weekend progressed served as a friendly port in a sea of fandom and made the weekend a lot more enjoyable for me. I guess that I have a lot to learn about packaging and marketing my talents but some of the suggestions you passed on have helped me along my way quite a bit. Thanks again.

I also want to compliment you on *Albedo*. I have to admit that until this weekend I hadn't picked up an issue simply because I decided to give up collecting comics some months back to save money for other things. Useless trifles like paint and board and suchlike and now I regret my decision, in part, because there ain't no way I can afford to buy #1 & #2 at the prices they are going for and I don't know of anyone in Sacramento who has them to borrow. Your repro is the best I have ever seen in the B&W comics genre (is that a 150 line or greater screen?) and the integration of the airbrush with the brushed highlights is truly elegant. All in all a real neat book, the big guys could learn a thing from you (how to starve and ruin your health, right?).

Martin G. Cameron
Sacramento, California

See, I'm approachable at conventions. And yes, becoming a stinking pro has its down side as well. And the screen, it's only 120 line.

Keep up the good work, and please keep printing on quality paper, even if you have to raise your prices! Love the airbrushing.

Eric Elliott
Santa Clara, CA
P.S. Who or what is this "KHA!" everybody swears by?

Thanks! Yeah, I like the continuingly good repro on everything myself. "Khai" refers to a growing creator myth. Since there has been no conclusive proof of origin for everyone, some people are seeking other than scientific explanations. This is a rather hard process, in that there is no history or traditions to draw on. Metaphysical thought is only just beginning and is yet only a very fringe subject.

Thank you very much for the copy of *Albedo* #5! I was wondering when the next issue would be out, and your note and comic arrived in a most timely way. I usually manage to pick up the book at cons, but I haven't been to one in several months and I was hoping I hadn't missed it. I've pestered our local comic store for it, but I don't think they've bothered to try and carry it yet.

I'd been meaning to write you a LoC for some time, to tell you how much I enjoy your comic work, both in *Albedo* and *Rowrbrazzle*, but I'm currently attending grad school and working at the same time and it does terrible things to my schedule. Lately I have been having to cut back on some of my other fannish activities due to the severe overload . . . one of those activities being *Rowrbrazzle*. I just don't have the time to do a decent job, much less make coherent mailing comments and I absolutely hate doing a half-assed job. Would love to see how your "Children of Nimh" story turns out. Will it be in Tim Fay's *Nimh* fanzine one day?

Usagi-san ga suki desu! (Guess who reads manga for fun?) Loved the art and the story has a lovely, traditional feel to it. Omoshiroi!

Albedo, of course, is simply great. I'm a Navy brat and the military flavor of your story makes me feel a tad homesick (if that's the right word for it). Damon Hill says you were in the Air Force? Stationed overseas at all? I've been on bases in the Philippines and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, among others.

Aargh! Colonel Hitzok better not croak! I think I'm in love with him! (Don't even ask me about my preference for horses!) Speaking of horses . . . must agree with Mr. Reynolds, how does Itzak manage without anything resembling hands? I know horses have very flexible upper lips but . . .!

By the way, the only little problem I noted with your story is a regrettable amount of misspellings. Either you have to have someone give your copy a final proof-reading, or your typesetter deserves to be shot. I counted at least 3 obvious typos this issue, and that makes things look glaringly un-pro. No offense meant.

Colleen Winters, Drexel Hill, PA
OKAY, NOW I'VE GOT TO GET THE TYPESETTING STRAIGHT

Hopefully, most of the typos have been weeded out with the addition of Bev to the "staff." That is, except for the portions that she doesn't get to see. Like this. Yes, I was overseas, Ramstein, Germany. Also, as I mentioned before, the "off camera" manipulative powers of some of the hooved and flippered folk is just my little suspension of disbelief element to the tale. Colleen is, as some of you might guess, rather fanactive and has a heavy Japanamated influenced style of art. *Rowrbrazzle* is a limited membership APA, but Tim's fanzine might be generally available. I'll have more on that later as I find out.

Here they are! Some more WRABs and (heh, heh) some Mighty Virus.

Haven't read nr. 0, 4, or 5 yet, but I have looked at them. Looks real nice, yup.

I dunno about calling them comic zines tho', I consider Albedo an independent pub. I mean heck, Albedo looks as good or better than a lot of indy pubs that are around.

Also glad to see the bi-monthly publishing, a lot of so-called indy pubs can't make that.

Keep it up, we'll be in touch!

Mike Kister
Southampton, PA

Mike is one of the co-conspirators at Howski Studios and a dangerous person to watch for in print.

Got the latest issue of Albedo (#5) today. Boy, that was fast! Promptness alone should ensure you a constant number of readers. While I'm the kind of person who would read half of Dune, read something else for two months, and pick up the book and finish it without loss of place or sequence, other people don't have the same kind of patience.

The real problem with writing a fan letter is in coming up with something to say. There's enough "really great" gosh-wow letters as it is without adding another. And to me, it's important to have something to say. When a book is done well, however, there's really no need to elaborate on the obvious. I trust the author. That's all that's really required in a book. If the author has done his work well, any questions the reader has will be answered in the course of the story. If it's relevant to the plot or theme, those questions will most certainly be answered. So long as the author plays fair, everything will be fine.

Looking forward to the premiere of Critters. Now you can be counted among the elite of comicdom (don't pay well, but don't it sure feel good).

Wayne

P.S. Getting letters intended for TMNT must've been embarrassing enough, but ORDERS as well?!? Arg!

Yeah, almost as much as not having your name and address on your letter. "Elite," eh? We'll see about that, though thanks for the vote of confidence. Yeah, it was interesting getting all that money for TMNT. Who said advertising doesn't pay?



HI! LAST MINUTE ADD-ONS.
HYPE AND HOOPLA FOR
FANTAGRAPHICS CRITTERS

COMING OUT LATER IN
FEBRUARY. I'LL BE IN IT.
AS WILL STAN SAKAI AND
JOSH QUAGHIRE.

ALBEDO NR 7 WILL BE OUT IN
TIME FOR NORWESCON. THAT WILL
BE 20-23 MARCH AT THE SEACAC
REDLION INN. LOTS OF BNP/BNF

AND McCAFFREY
KELLY FREAS
SPIDER ROBINSON
AND ME!!

Steven A. Gallacci
P.O. Box 19419
Queen Anne Station
Seattle, WA 98109

Don't worry, Steve. I've seen cats in the nude before.

But Erma does look like hell when she gets out of the fur-dryer. You're obviously extrapolating on the fact that your hair doesn't get completely dry from the use of a towel, no matter how thoroughly you use it. We need a blast of hot air to help out, critteroids even more. There are definitely advantages to being born a relatively hairless primate. Speaking of primates, how come I haven't seen any of those?

If Stan Sakai is looking forward to doing any more Usagi Yojimbo stories, I'd like him to know that I'd like to see Lord Noriyuki learn swordsmanship. In spite of his high rank, Noriyuki is good sidekick material. He's willing to risk his life for others, and who better to teach him to handle his blades than Mayamoto Usagi?

My first look at the Adventures of Nilson Groundthumper. Looks like a whole 'nother artist did this piece. Are you sure it's you? Don't look it! I'm not prepared to deal with a single artist working in two different styles.

To bring it on home, what would be the effect of a visiting tactician on a Homeguard base who makes brilliant decisions yet for political reasons refuses credit for them? How are interested parties going to explain Homeguard personnel suddenly getting smart? I can bet a pretty penny it wasn't your everyday Muse who inspired Dael Valderzha to buzz the demonstrators at the base. Sounds more like the aforementioned visiting tactician.

Sincerely,
G. Raymond Eddy
Carrollton, OH

Nope. No primates. No, that was Stan Sakai again on NILSON GROUNDTHUMPER. Actually, the Homeguard officers aren't that unbright, just under-experienced in unconventional situations.

I would like to see an "Erma Felna Fan Club." Also, let's see some posters, EDF patches, and pin-ups (her charm impresses a lot of us!). After all, hype brings riches. Doesn't it? (You betcha!)

On page 13 of nr. 5, panel 2, you showed us a armored fighting vehicle. The question is: how do you fit two weapons (or one weapon and a large sighting device) plus gunner in a turret that small?

Greg Salter

ESTACADA, OR

ANOTHER TYPESETTING-SLIP- WELL, ACTUALLY,
I FORGOT TO GIVE THE 'SETTER' THE ADDRESS.
AND SINCE I'M TAKING THIS IN TO PRESS THIS
SAME MORNING, THERE'S NO TIME TO GET
IT SET. REMEMBER THAT—

A fan club? Several people have asked about such. A couple of guys, locally, came by not long ago and asked about starting one, but had no idea how. I'd be happy to see a fan activity, providing I don't have to do all the work and it reflects positively on ALBEDO and Erma. I'll pass on messages to anyone who wants to get together on this. As for weapons configurations, the turret in question is a one "man" system with a 24mm power loaded fast firing gun and a 48mm grenade launcher. There is plenty of room, though the drawing does show the two weapons too close together.

As always, I'm still selling my ever-popular ALBEDO and ERMA FELNA T-shirts in lt. blue and lt. gray, \$8.00 for any size in cotton/poly. Even though ALBEDO nr. 1 and 2 are entirely sold out, I've got lots of nr. 3 and nr. 5 and a few nr. 4 left at \$2 each. I'll probably do another batch of nr. 0, the prototype issue, for \$1.00. Individual pages of original art from ERMA FELNA, EDF, are available from issues nr. 2 on up, for \$50.00 each. Be sure to list alternate choices in case your first choices are sold. Sure, it sounds like a real money grubbing deal, but it's not so bad, and, unfortunately, just about the only way a little independent production can stay above water.

ALBEDO

ANTHROPOMORPHICS



MORE THAN JUST FUNNY ANIMALS

ERMA
FELNA
EDF



© SA GALLAGHER '81

AND YET ANOTHER SECTION THAT DIDN'T GET TYPE-SET IN TIME. THANKS AND A PLUG FOR **BUD PLANT** and Co. FOR BEING SUCH GOOD SPORTS AND CONTINUING TO ORDER ALBEDOs. - P.O. 1886, GRASSVALLEY, CA 95945. CAPITAL CITY DISTRIBUTION IS STILL HANDLING ME, TOO - 2827 Perry St., MADISON, WI 53713. GLENWOOD DISTRIBUTORS HAS FINALLY STARTED ORDERING FROM ME AND CAN BE APPROACHED AT 124 VANDALIA AVE. COLLINSVILLE, IL 62234. IT'S NICE TO GET MORE EAST-COAST EXPOSURE, ESPECIALLY SINCE THERE AREN'T MORE THAN A DOZEN COPIES OF THE FIRST COUPLE OF ISSUES EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI. I HEAR THAT SOME SHOPS ONLY GET A FEW COPIES THAT USUALLY SELL-OUT AWFULLY FAST. HEROES WORLD CERTAINLY WON'T, THE WAY THEY ORDER. 70 MORRIS ST. MORRISTOWN, N.J. 07960. SUNRISE COMICS IS A BACK ISSUE OUTFIT, I GUESS, AND THEY HAVE STARTED HANDLING ALBEDO ALSO. 5313 SHEILA ST. COMMERCE, CA. 90040. CLOSER TO HOME, ZANADU COMICS IS STILL MY FAV' AT 203 UNION ST. SEATTLE, WA. 98101. GOLDEN AGE COLLECTABLES IS BIGGER, AND SURLY WHEN NOT MENTIONED, SO I WILL. THEN THERE'S STEVE AT ROCKETCOMICS, KARL AT WALLY'S COMICS. I'M EVEN AT TOWERBOOKS!! GOSH, IT MUST BE LEGIT NOW! AND THANKS TO ALL THE OTHER SHOPS AND SUCH, TOO!

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